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## THE ROUND TABLE.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1863.

### MR. SHERMAN'S BILL.

THE Finance Committee of the United States Senate has reported a bill to cure our financial troubles. A singular reason is assigned for reporting this measure, to wit, that the committee might thus get rid of considering other financial schemes offered to public attention. In other words, the committee were tired of studying the subject. How much good thought the committee have already expended may be seen in the fact that they report what they call a comprehensive measure, which omits to treat at all of the fundamental question, namely, how we are to get back to a sound currency. They busy themselves with alterations in every other part of our rickety financial structure except its foundation. They admit the foundation to be shaky, but suggest no method of strengthening it. They would borrow money at lower rates of interest, but omit to provide for paying debts which are past due. They openly disregard the claims of one class of their creditors, and yet ask the world in general to give them better trust. They shrink from future repudiation and ignore the repudiation of which the Treasury is guilty now every day.

When a man has earned by his labor and received a three dollar legal-tender note, he is the honest owner of an instrument which reads: "The United States promise to pay to the bearer three dollars." No time being specified for its payment and no compensation promised for delay in payment, the promise is payable on demand. When a capitalist has bought and paid for a hundred dollar five-twenty bond, he is the honest owner of a promise of the United States to pay him one hundred dollars at the end of twenty years, and to pay him, meantime, three dollars every six months. At the end of every six months the United States give the latter three genuine gold dollars, in strict compliance with their promise. Their other creditor, also holding their promise for three dollars, they treat with contempt, if he demands fulfillment. The man who holds the government promise to pay three dollars is just as much the creditor of the government as the man who receives a coupon order on the Treasury for three dollars. We must get rid of this discrimination—get rid of it not by being dishonest alike toward the bond-holder and toward the holder of the legal-tender note, but by being honest to both. Further repudiation is no cure for existing repudiation. The way to avoid all repudiation is to stop such as is now in practice. The discrimination now made between the two classes of creditors has danger in it. We hear the cry already that the money which is good enough for the people is good enough for the bond-holder. It is, we know, a senseless cry; the people would lose more by any shortcoming in the contract with the bond-holder than they lose now by strict compliance. But the existence of the cry, and the loud tones in which it makes itself heard from some influential quarters of the country, should warn us of the danger of leaving this evil to cure itself. The truth of the matter is that the money now in general use is not good enough for anybody; it is bad for the ordinary purposes of the people; it would make the matter no better, but worse, to pay this bad money also to the bond-holder. In fact, the use of this same bad money for all purposes would simply involve us in the use of money which would soon become as worthless for any purpose as the old continental scrip. The only thing that gives it any stability of value now is the fact that the government pays a large portion of its debts in good money, and the hope, thence derived, that it will some day pay all its debts, including our present paper currency, in good money. Let the Treasury enter upon the policy of paying nothing whatever in gold, and all the money now in the people's pockets will soon turn to ashes. Some of the promises of the Treasury are now complied with; others are not. How can things be made better by its complying with none?

There is evidently no time to be lost in giving to our every-day money a better character. Industry is becoming paralyzed; enterprise is frightened; the revenues of the government show signs of a coming deficiency; its power to remedy existing evils will diminish with its revenues. Demagogues are misleading the instincts of the people, which honestly revolt against unjust discrimination. They tell them to level downward instead of upward; to bring the bond debt down to the level of the legal-tender note, and not to bring the latter up to the honest level of the bonds. Of the pressing duty of the government, to put itself as soon as possible in a position to meet all its debts squarely and honestly, the committee take no notice. They occupy themselves solely with a plan for frightening the public creditors into giving up their present bonds in exchange for something of less value. They recite, in their report, all the arguments that have been offered in favor of the scheme of partial repudiation by paying the bonds in greenbacks, not expressly approving of these arguments, yet not condemning them. They leave the public creditor to infer that he may be paid in greenbacks, instead of gold, and that it may be his interest to compromise his claims at once, in order to avoid a worse fate. And yet, with an absurd inconsistency, which proves their utter want of thoughtfulness, they show the public creditor how empty is this threat against his rights. For while they talk of payment in greenbacks, they at the same time protest against the manufacture of any more greenbacks. The Treasury has no surplus income of greenbacks out of which to pay the bonds, and the only way in which it can get greenbacks wherewith to pay the bonds is by printing more of them. If the protest of the committee against issuing more legal-tender notes is to be heeded by Congress, the owners of five-twenty bonds may go to sleep in quiet. They need not exchange them for five per cent. bonds under the vain threat of paying the principal now in paper. There is no paper wherewith to pay it.

Since this bill appeared, Senator Sherman, the chairman of the committee, has been charged in some of the journals with being a secret partner in a well-known banking-house. The charge has been promptly denied. We are glad of the denial, but sorry there was any occasion for it. If Mr. Sherman is surprised, as well he may be, at the appearance of such a charge against him, let him look over the provisions of his bill again, and he will find out how the accusation probably originated. The bill authorizes the enormous sum of \$16,000,000 to be paid to some one for effecting the exchange of the five-twenty bonds into the proposed new bonds. This sum, it is true, is to cover all expenses; but, beside brokerage, there can be no expense, except for printing. For a brokerage of one-eighth of one per cent. any house in Wall street would be glad to act as agent for the Treasury in effecting the exchange. Yet the bill allows one per cent. for brokerage and printing bills—one per cent. on the sum-total of the five-twenty bonds, and that sum-total will be, by next August, \$1,600,000,000. Any outsider can see a big job lurking in the folds of the bill and it is natural that suspicion should extend itself over every one who has a hand in the matter.

The selected wisdom of Congress proposes no better remedy for the depression now spreading over the country's industry but to fund the debt—which has just been once funded—over again. They propose to revive the credit of the government by offering to cheat its creditors out of one per cent. a year if the creditors will submit quietly to be cheated; if they will not, then to cheat them more. They would relieve the suffering of the people, now so extensive both North and South, by giving an alms of fifteen or sixteen millions to a favorite broker.

### OUR CIVIL SERVICE.

#### VIII.

SINCE the publication of our first disquisition on this all-important subject considerable progress has been made in the discussion and recommendation of Mr. Jenckes's competitive system in the leading reviews and journals of the country, and we understand that many members of both houses of Congress who were previously opposed to the bill of the honorable member from Rhode Island, upon the ground of its ten-

dency to curtail the patronage of politicians, have since waived their opposition, so that there is now a fair prospect of its speedily becoming the law of the land.

The competition for public service being, under this bill, open to all classes of the population, each congressional district will contribute its ratio of candidates, so that the protégés of congressmen will all have the same chance of employment as heretofore. With this difference, that only those who will be eligible who possess the requisite qualifications, as prescribed by the new bill. Those politicians of the old school who hold to the doctrine that well-ascertained aptitude and integrity, as tests for public service, are incompatible with the chaotic nature of a rough-and-tumble democracy form only a small section of what may be called the diabolical party. Their objections may have considerable weight in bar-rooms, but begin to be scouted with scorn by the enlightened masses of the community. Certain custom-house directors and heads of departments, and hack politicians may regret the good old times, when they could with impunity disgrace the service of the country by cramming public offices with their satellites, but their lamentations will awake few sympathetic echoes except in the hearts of those who are hostile to the republic, and who chuckle with delight over this insidious method of bringing it into disrepute and tearing it to pieces.

The scramble for office which follows in the train of every Presidential election, and which is the source of so much demoralization, will, in virtue of the adoption of the principle of qualification, lose, at all events, some of its most objectionable features. Intelligent and accomplished citizens of the republic, who have heretofore shunned contact with public life as long as it held out premiums only to incapacity and corruption, and no inducements to merit and probity, may in future be encouraged to devote their services to the state. Unless American democracy secures the co-operation of the most intelligent, of the best qualified, of the most highly cultured men, it will inevitably share in the end the fate of all previous democracies; attempts which were regularly shipwrecked in consequence of the fatal mistake that democracy means the exclusive rule of the lowest and most uneducated people of the nation. Mr. Jenckes's bill takes the first step toward better things, to be followed, we trust, by more comprehensive reforms, until we have secured the highest talent and most exemplary moral culture of the country for the service of the state.

The principal revenue commissioners take strong ground in their reports to Congress in favor of the principle of mental and moral qualification as a means of protecting the revenue of the country against the frauds and imbecilities that now beset it. These and all other unbiased functionaries are in favor of such a reform. They may have pet schemes of their own, and the Jenckes bill may not meet all expectations, but a gigantic reform like this cannot be expected to be carried out all at once. The best that can be done is to merge all minor differences for the purpose of adopting the Jenckes bill as an incipient measure, remedying some of the most crying evils, and paving the way for ulterior reforms. The republic is at present in a condition which requires, on the one hand the utmost retrenchment of expenditure, and on the other, a complete reorganization of the public service. In the face of the Southern reconstruction difficulty the republic is called upon to organize the new territory of Alaska and perhaps also that of St. Thomas. The lust for more land is not to stop at the Arctic or in the Antilles. The result of all this will be the creation of more public offices. Under the old system it might be as well to draw for these offices, so that the winner may clutch the prize and become a territorial officer or clerk. The chance would be as much in favor of the qualifications of these tricky wights as of those appointed under the old system. Of Alaska, for instance, we heard a good deal in the way of brilliant rhetoric; but while the land was flooded with Arctic metaphors, not one of the persons sent out had the intelligence to discover that our soldiers would be frozen to death while the imagination of their fellow-citizens was fired by the eloquence of their orators. We allude to this incidentally as an evidence of the total absence of brains in public life as at present constituted.

If the persons appointed to these new territorial and to other public offices had been selected under Mr.

Jenckes's bill, they would be conscious of serving the state and not a mere head of a department, and they would consequently subserve the interests of the people and not those of a "policy." They would at least be sufficiently familiar with natural history to know that if a territory is embedded in ice and snow, some precautionary measures have to be taken to protect the soldiers detailed on that station against being frozen to death. At a time, therefore, when the republic is daily extending its empire, and new offices are established accordingly, the adoption of a stringent test of office becomes more important than ever; else even these new dominions may go to rot and ruin from maladministration.

With two immense sea-coasts—the Atlantic and the Pacific—to guard, the custom-house service alone will require armies of employees. The revenue service and the various departments will also increase their business to a vast extent. It will not be too much to assert that within a short period there will be more persons employed in the public service of the Atlantic and Pacific dominions of the republic than in all the European states together. Think of a hundred thousand employees selected at random, according to the caprice of a custom-house director or a secretary or a hack politician, without guarantee of their qualification either intellectual or moral! The imagination shrinks from fathoming the consequences of such a revolting chaos. Indeed, it would seem as if the republic cared only for clutching empire, without the least thought or care of administering and preserving it, and making it conducive to the welfare of the people. Any savage chief may acquire empire by purchase or by conquest, but the preservation and the use of it depends altogether upon the intellectual and moral forces employed in its administration.

If we go on with our old system we shall present to mankind the spectacle of a nation which spreads from ocean to ocean and grasps one territory after another, without mental forces to administer such a vast empire, and without moral force to have a public service distinguished for its integrity. We have already shown on previous occasions that, in spite of our costly legations and hundreds of consulates, England and France take the lion's share of the world's commerce, while our foreign ministers make desperate efforts to be admitted to court circles, and to be invited to the soirées of people of title and fashion. We have further shown that our multitudinous bureaus and troops of clerks obstruct rather than advance the public interests, and need to be curtailed as well as to be sifted. In view of all this, and of the additional territorial acquisitions to the republic, the people demand that Congress should procrastinate no longer in regard to the adoption of the bills which we trust to see introduced soon after the reassembling of this body for the greater retrenchment and better efficiency of the home and foreign service.

#### TASTE IN JOURNALISM.

QUESTIONS of taste in journalism may be regarded from so many different sides that it is generally discreet to treat them with that temperateness which recognizes the possibility of honest difference of opinion. Thus, a leading magazine publishes an article which from one point of view may be described as an able and interesting account of the progress of a certain important branch of American art. From another aspect the article assumes the guise of an elaborate puff of an eminent manufacturing company to whom its great value is suggestively obvious. Now, if English precedents are reckoned of any moment, it is easy to show that accounts of the inventions and achievements of great manufacturers, especially in the departments of ceramic and decorative art, have repeatedly been published in British periodicals of the highest rank, and accepted by the public as legitimate and useful information. That such an account is incidentally of great service to the manufacturer is, of course, perfectly plain; but it has been, we suppose, tacitly assumed that the general interest of the public was subserved by the publication as well as the particular interest of individuals; and that the former constituted a sufficiently good reason for printing the article to overcome any possible objections to exhibiting regard for the former. No one would justly say that the invention of Daguerre was not on its announcement a fair topic of discussion for magazine or

newspaper, notwithstanding the presumable advantage of such publicity to the inventor; or that the various discoveries in telegraphic science might not legitimately be treated in a similar way, even at the risk of helping to swell the fortune of individuals immediately interested. There are, of course, degrees in these things; but there is certainly no resource but for editor or publisher to use his own judgement, submitting, as he subsequently must, to that of the public, upon the wisdom or defensibility of his decision. If *The Herald* chooses to print notices of quack medicines in its leading editorials, it is its right to do so. The editor knows best what sort of reputation he desires to establish or to sustain, and his title to do what he likes with his own is indefeasible. If the immediate gain of such procedures is so considerable as to outweigh the possible disadvantage of impairing the dignity or the credit of a journal, the point is one for the owner to decide. The public have no immediate but only an indirect power in such cases. If what is called puffery be carried too far—which is merely another way of saying that public interest is sacrificed to private interest—the means of retaliation are in the public's own hands.

It is to the recognition of this principle that the general quiet acquiescence in the effectiveness of its working is due. Many of the religious papers habitually admit paid puffs into their editorial columns; and they let each other alone on the glass house principle. Their real influence is undoubtedly diminished by the practice; but puffs bring in handsome returns in the shape of immediate cash, and influence is partly of an apocryphal and prospective character whose value is therefore less susceptible of tangible measurement. Apart from this, it is only just to admit that puffery of shops and wares is not the only sort of puffery indulged in by even respectable journals. There is such a thing as puffing politicians and strong candidates for office, and prominent and wealthy men, and pet measures, which is fairly quite as obnoxious to suspicion or censure as the more glaring laudations of hair-oils and sewing-machines and bitters. There are journals that will indignantly refuse insertion to the latter, but abandon themselves with charming unreserve to the former class of eulogiums—and which undoubtedly have their reward. It is undeniable that one among the many objects of journalism is that of making money. The public is the judge—in the long run, a tolerably accurate one—how far this intrinsically reasonable object is pursued in an honorable and high-minded manner. The character of a journal is usually established, like that of an individual, from within and not from without. It depends upon itself, not upon contemporaneous publications, what hold it shall maintain on the respect of the community. The virtue that for good reasons has never been tempted may not make its possessor the best judge of backsliding in others. None of her sex is so severe upon the weakness of her sisters as the woman whose charms have failed to attract manly appreciation. Such considerations may not justify the devotion of pages which are, in a conventional sense, the property of the public to private interests, but they suggest the propriety of caution in giving heed to what may be ungenerous or one-sided criticism.

Another feature has lately been thrust upon public attention, more particularly by a portion of the metropolitan press, that scarcely calls for qualified treatment. We refer to the indecent publication of personal details, the unscrupulous revelation of scenes and incidents of private life by which certain journals have sought to force themselves into notoriety and circulation. It is pitiable to add that a paper once of decent, if of somewhat weak and frivolous character, has been in this respect a leading offender. Whatever may have been said or thought of the deceased founder of this journal, he was at least a gentleman—a man who thoroughly knew the *convenances* of life—and the degeneracy of his paper into a sort of flash organ of pinchbeck society must be extremely distressing to his surviving friends. But it is something worse. It is an insult to the good sense and the good feeling of the community that such nauseous twaddle should be spread each week before it in a print which depends upon former respectability to gain admittance into decent families. We are quite aware that society has changed somewhat of late years in New York. We are quite ready to believe that there may be some scores of uneducated,

giggling girls, and feeble snobs of young men, whose fathers have made money in haste to spend it in folly, and who may be tickled to see in print descriptions of their gowns and waistcoats, their dancings and junketings, their Germans and flirtations, and their ineffably puerile conversation. But is this the kind of stuff to print in a paper claiming to be respectable in a sensible and educated community? We cannot conceive of a father of average sense and feeling, whatever his culture, seeing such things as we have lately seen published about a hundred young women of this city, without finding his fingers itching to get hold of a horsewhip; and we have certainly been very much surprised that no such inclination has as yet developed into a practical form.

The journal in question has set up, we believe, the ridiculous defence that similar practices are tolerated in reputable newspapers abroad, that it is the "court journal" of America, and so on. The position is untenable for a number of obvious reasons, among which the fact that the method of treatment is radically different. It is true that some of the London papers describe the dresses worn by ladies of rank upon state and other important occasions; but they never by any chance allow themselves, or for a day would be allowed, the impudent familiarity of publishing commendatory or flattering notices of the persons of the ladies themselves. We never read in their columns that the sweetly fascinating Miss Jones wore a blue moire with point lace and pearls, or that the voluptuous-looking Miss Jenkins (whose respected parent did such a heavy thing in pork last year) was quite ravishing in purple velvet and diamonds. Stuff like this has for some time disgraced more than one of our papers; and it is high time it were reformed, put down either by ridicule or something less gentle.

Anything more offensive, more disgustingly underbred, than this nuisance it is impossible to imagine. But a new grossness has lately sprung up—perhaps it would be more accurate to say a fresh and exaggerated phase of an old grossness has been developed—much more demoralizing and alarming. The nudities of the *Black Crook* and the prurient tastes such spectacles have nursed into unwholesome vigor are to be credited, we suppose, with the new crop of "sensation" illustrated papers, which exceed for the coarseness and meretriciousness of their pictures anything that has ever before disgraced the metropolis. Vile drawing and hideously unfunny caricature, things that, starting from every news-stand, have implied nothing less than that the mass of the population were relapsing into barbarism, have been abundant enough; but of sketches positively indecent and sometimes obscene, sketches directly calculated to inflame the imagination and poison the mind, we have hitherto been cursed with comparatively few. One journal in particular that has recently made its appearance should be taken in hand by the authorities. Its publication would not be permitted in London for a single week; and although its projector may exhibit a close appreciation of the public taste—what he would call, we suppose, "business tact"—in bringing out this infamous sheet, the state of his moral nature that permits him deliberately to spread thousands upon thousands of copies through the community, copies each one of which may be expected to pollute in a greater or less degree the minds of half a dozen young people, must be pitiable indeed. If prints like these are to be allowed to circulate among us with impunity, then indeed is it a sign that taste in journalism is reaching its lowest possible stages of decadence and we fear that public morals are deteriorating in a corresponding degree.

#### BUREAUCRATIC HIGGLING.

A PARSIMONIOUS scrutiny of each penny of expenditure, such as is accounted among small tradesmen a triumphant manifestation of the commercial mind, is scarcely among the ennobling characteristics of a great nation. It is especially unbecoming that, while the public money is being absorbed by millions among people who have no possible claim upon the country, the practice of screwing down public payments to the utmost should be put in force only against those to whom they are honestly due. Economy and retrenchment are, it is true, and with reason, just now very popular. That the millions drawn in all sorts of ways from the popular pocket should be reduced by its passage among an army of collectors and deputies and officials of every degree,

like the stream of the Nile in its long course through Egyptian sands and under a tropical sun, until they reach the national treasury only as thousands, is a wrong of a sort which is keenly appreciated. That the moiety or less which does get there should be further reduced by perennial rills fertilizing only the bank accounts of sharp parvenus, appears to the taxpayer much as it would to the Egyptian if his laboriously filled reservoir were to be tapped for the benefit of his neighbors' fields. The whole system is one of the heaviest burdens of a groaning people, and must be dearly accounted for by the party under whose rule it has established itself. Still, the cure for illegitimate and corrupt expenditures should not consist of shaving liabilities that are legitimate and due, and it is to these that some of the departments are chiefly addressing themselves with immense energy.

The Postmaster-General, for instance, for a long time has been manifesting a pitiful solicitude about the cost of advertising the lists of uncalled-for letters. He began by disregarding the advertising rates which circulation and like considerations had fixed, and paid prices which did little more than cover the cost of setting up the type. For a time the pride of this official certification to being "the paper of the largest circulation" induced publishers to print the list at their own loss, but they soon became tired of it, and then the list was transferred to obscure journals glad to get anything for their space, and in which nobody ever thought of looking for it. Now it is announced that the Postmaster-General, unwilling to pay anything, is about to present his department as an applicant for gratuitous favors and send the list, as close-fisted rustic showmen send eulogiums of their wares to the village editor, to papers willing to "print it free as a matter of news." Throughout the war the advertising of the national loans afforded a similar instance. Bankers, brokers, advertising-agents became rich upon it; but newspapers not strong enough to be independent printed the advertisements at rates fixed by the agents, and upon condition of frequent insertions of long articles supplied to them in praise of the loans—services which, in view of the national exigencies, publishers were willing enough to render, but which, less for their sake than for its own honor, the government should have paid for, as it did wherever necessary insertions could not be procured on the mendicant principle.

In all its dealings the government is guilty of practices in which no merchant of standing would dare to indulge. To continue the illustration from advertisements, we have known cases—and we believe them to be frequent—where bills rendered for government advertising, charged at the regular rates of the journals publishing them, have been retained as long as three years unnoticed, then returned with an abatement of one third of the amount and the first of the multitudinous signatures requisite to their payment. The creditor must perforce accept it, since by doing otherwise he would probably avail nothing, and would certainly have to recommence the delays and dunning *de novo*. Such vexatious modes of proceeding are almost invariable, and among their consequences is the important one that the honest contractor—incredible as it may seem, there are such—is obliged in estimating his bid to provide not only for the cost of his work, but for years of delayed payment, for repeated journeys to Washington and loss of time and money there, beside dunces to induce little-great men to "facilitate" the progress of his claim. This abominable practice is so prevalent that innumerable shoals of rascally sharpers swarm about every public office to feed upon the public creditors. The soldier desirous to exchange his warrant for the promised bounty, the widow seeking to collect the pension bought with her husband's life, the manufacturer asking payment for his wares, the traveler trying to pay his duties and extricate his goods from the custom-house, all learn from repeated snubs and rebuffs that there is no thoroughfare except through the instrumentality of unofficial parasites of officials, whose rapacity must be appeased as the preliminary step to an adjustment.

Very much of this will doubtless be summarily ended whenever the civil-service reforms aimed at in Mr. Jenckes's bill shall be effected. But, meanwhile, some things ought to be appreciated which would seem never to have suggested themselves. Among these are, that in all matters which have to do with equity, honesty, and fairness the same considerations should be made to obtain in the public disbursements which are regarded in the dealings of honorable merchants; also that, in another set of national expenditures, it is inexpedient to limit them with that regard to strict economy which men may very properly employ in their private affairs. Of the first sort of errors it is idle to speak so long as there exists the pestilential

theory that to the victors belong the spoils, and, by consequence, that the spoils should be kept at the maximum. It only remains to hope that, in view of the strong probability of its being made ere long to abandon them to others, if not from a more noble repentance, the party now in power may do what would very largely condone its flagrant sins, by substituting for the present system of corruption, nepotism, and political simony, a just one under which its own adherents would stand quite as good a chance as those of its opponents. By some means or other we must come at such a simplification and reduction in the civil and the foreign service as General Grant has been effecting in Mr. Stanton's costly army establishment. We want fewer of the ten-thousand-a-year foreign missions we lately described and of other officers and whole bureaus maintained solely that prospective lucrative sinecures may inspire working politicians to vigilant efforts. We want, in a word, heavily taxed and laden with debt as we are, to be rid of the hundreds of superfluous channels of expenditure now existing, and if possible of those features of our fiscal legislation which have occasioned many of them. But we should not stint the payment of debts justly incurred. Where the national welfare requires that official duties shall be discharged, or that business services of any sort shall be rendered, they ought to be paid for, not merely with promptitude and fairness, but with a liberality of a different sort from that of commercial transactions.

There are other things than dollars and cents to be regarded in the dealings of a great government, and the Postmaster-General might be much more decently employed than in cheapening advertisements like a Chatham Street old clo' man, and the heads of other departments than in permitting their subordinates to obstruct payments and throw business into the hands of irresponsible and disreputable shysters. There is, to be sure, an independence in the matter of using money that is in itself highly honorable, and there are few things more essentially contemptible than ostentatious prodigality. But of the few, miserliness is one. While we cannot on the one hand afford reckless profusion, still less should we deserve the imputation of meanness by contrast with other nations. There is very false economy in attaching such salaries to our embassies to European courts as compel our ministers either to appear at a humiliating disadvantage as compared with those of other powers, or to employ their own fortunes in maintaining the national honor, so far as display has to do with it. It is worse that the Presidential salary should remain at what was ample only in the last century, and has now shrunk below the incomes of many hundreds of opulent citizens, and allows no President—who leaves his office to be thenceforth practically a finished and useless man—to creditably return to private life a dollar richer than when he left it. The exactly right point may not be readily discerned without experiment, but it is a safe assumption that as a nation we shall do better to err on the side of munificence than of niggardliness.

#### SMALL TALK.

OF all drawing-room accomplishments, small talk is not only the most necessary, but, while seemingly so easy of acquisition, in reality among the most difficult. The most necessary, because however a man may excuse himself from singing, or dancing, or playing the piano, or acting in charades, or winding worsted, he can scarcely avoid talking in society; and, unless he be able to converse fluently in the dialect which society has made its own, he is apt to be set down for a dummy or a bore—a sufficiently unpleasant alternative. Its difficulty becomes, on slight reflection, equally apparent. To talk really well about anything is no ordinary achievement, but to talk really well about nothing requires infinitely greater art. It is a mistake to suppose that ninnies excel in small talk; in this, as in every other accomplishment, brains are sure sooner or later to tell. Of course they must not obtrude; but hidden, like the manager of a puppet show, must leave on the mind of the gratified hearer a certain vague suggestion of nearness and influence which she would find it impossible to analyze, even with a keener analytic sense than most women possess. We use the feminine pronoun advisedly; for of course it is only between men and women that small talk ever attains its perfection—perhaps it would be more accurate to say only in the mouth of a man talking to a woman. Women, in their intercourse with one another, use something which nearly resembles, but which is not small talk. The essence of small talk is trifling, and though the subjects which women discuss with women may seem to our lofty masculine inspection very trifling indeed,

yet from circumstances they derive a great and not altogether factitious importance. Details of dress and fashion, the shade of a ribbon, the turn of a hair, become matters of very serious moment when we reflect how greatly they influence the end which every proper-minded girl sets for herself as the one great aim of existence—the attainment of a desirable *parti*. An ill-fitting gown may frighten off a possible lover, an unbecoming color may revolt a presumptive spouse. With men the rule is the same for a different reason. Their pursuits are usually of so engrossing a nature as to leave little leisure and less inclination for indulgence in the lighter graces of conversation. Their talk is often idle and profitless enough, but when it is not too grave it is commonly too coarse for small talk, which should be dainty, delicate, glowing, and evanescent as a bubble on champagne. It is only men of cultivation and intellect united with *esprit* that ever reach this perfection, and they only when inspired by feminine beauty, vivacity, and grace. Under the fostering light and warmth of laughing eyes and lovely lips blooms into full fruition the converse which, say what you will, at once best gratifies and suits the fastidious ear of Society; nonsense, it is true, pure and unadulterated, but nonsense informed with wit, suggestive, but never more than suggestive, of ideas, irradiated with fancy, tremulous with tenderness, wreathed with a caress. Fortunate the man who is master of such small talk! happier still the woman who hears it! Homely John Wilkes knew very well what he was about when he boasted that the handsomest dandy in town had only a half hour's start of him; and Mirabeau, with his face of a tiger with the small-pox, was made a most irresistible squire of dames by such brilliancy of small talk as only a Frenchman may hope to compass.

Only a good general talker can be a good small talker; but what are commonly called the best talkers are not necessarily most proficient in small talk. For this a man should be able not only to talk, but to converse, two things which are by no means synonymous. Johnson and Coleridge were wonderful talkers, but as Lamb said of the latter, they preached, not conversed. Neither of them had any more definite idea of what conversation meant than Madame de Staël, who being introduced in jest to a deaf and dumb gentleman and ignorant of his infirmity, declared him, after a two-hours' tête-à-tête the most delightful talker she had ever listened to. Men who pride themselves on their conversational abilities are apt to rely too much on whatever pleasure they excite; to ignore the sage proverb that speech is silver, but silence is golden; to become enamored of their voices like Narcissus of his face, and so to forget that conversation is an affair of at least two. Such as these could never bend their trombones into the bugles of small talk, where also, more than in any other species of conversation, monopoly would be disastrous. For, leaving out of question that womanly dislike of reticence which Eve has transmitted to her daughters, it is absolutely impossible, to men at least (habitual practice makes it easier for women), to talk small talk for any length of time without resting. Just as doing nothing is the hardest physical work, so saying nothing aloud is the most distressing mental labor, not because one's mind is at all exercised, but just because it is not; just because there is a certain delusive phantasm of labor without any corresponding result. Small talk, therefore, requires at least two performers; a greater number injures its completeness by depriving it of that flavor of tenderness which a man must be *solus cum sold* ever to risk. So constituted, and between actors of the proper ability, nothing can be more delightful, for it has all the essential enjoyment of rational conversation without its tiresome continuity of thought and its exhaustive tax on the brains.

We have said that small talk is the sort of conversation which not only pleases but suits society best. For society is not intended solely for the benefit of intellect or wisdom; on the contrary, it must be conceded that the vast majority of the people one meets in society are dreadfully unintellectual. Social converse, therefore, must be regulated much on the same principle as a handicap race; that is to say, it must be accommodated to the level of the lowest mind. It is an impertinence to be wise in a ball-room; there, if anywhere, is the *locus desipiendi*. There are better places for discussing conic sections or the Cartesian doubt; there is no place where a lady might be expected to feel less interest in the binomial theorem or the doctrine of future punishment. People go into society for amusement and relaxation; they fold up their brains, as it were, on entering and at most show only the covers. Small talk is to other talk as dessert is to dinner, or, more accurately speaking (for one gets speedily surfeited of

dessert), it is as the bread and potatoes, of which we never grow tired, to the roast beef and plum-pudding, which are only made palatable by constant change. Moreover, these commonplaces of conversation, these inanities of pleasant prattle, are the neutral ground on which strangers meet to exchange civilities; the skirmishers that one puts forth to feel the enemy's conversational force. Without the invaluable aid of these conventional formulæ two persons meeting for the first time would be rather at a loss for means of opening mutual intercourse. Intrinsically considered there are many subjects more entertaining, many that are vastly more novel, than the weather; there is none that one can so safely trust to launch the unwieldy ship of talk. You may be sure that your neighbor will have something to say about the elemental influences, while the odds are ten to one that he or she will be dumb to the merits of the Galin method of musical notation.

Sensible people—we use the word sensible in contradistinction to the term brilliant,—sensible people are apt to sneer at small talk and to revile its votaries; but that is because merely sensible people so rarely acquire the art. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico* is not a universal rule; we quite as often despise what we do not understand. And in spite of sneers and reviling, small talk will continue to flourish from the very necessity of the case as long as society exists. Even apart from this, its adepts have rather the best of the argument. They are seldom dull, at least to one another; while there is no more tiresome bore than a sensible man who insists on being sensible out of season.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

##### KNICKERBOCKER LITERATURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:  
SIR: Flippancy and pertness may be refreshing for a change if brisk, lively, and combined with a degree of smartness. They are as good as something better for an occasional study, though if they choose to stultify themselves before the public, we should enjoy the exhibition better if they would favor us with a glimpse of their real presence, and not take to anonymous writing. The upstart defamer of illustrious names who discourses so glibly about what he calls *Knickerbocker Literature*—Knickerbocker literature forsooth!—in the respectable columns of a New York weekly, is like a certain wretched bird well known to proverb. His diatribe is happy in the opportunity which suggested it. In passing by the new-made grave of Halleck he takes occasion to spit thereon, and he has the like compliment, and never a green sprig, for the yet fresh graves of his more distinguished countrymen. It is not likely that any just fame will be dispelled, or enviable notoriety acquired. The trick of producing a sensation, formerly in the hands of showmen, is at present of wider use, though it smacks of the old vulgarity. We have sensation plays, sensation lectures, sensation speeches, and sometimes, when the times are dull, sensation articles in the newspapers. It is becoming a stale device; and for some one to assert, for instance, that Socrates was a fool, Washington was no patriot, or that some one else who had always been accounted brave was a coward, would not be so very startling in our days. We do not look out of the window at everything. Statements of such a kind are usually made for a clever display of curious research, and sustained by *quasi* proofs, that the authors may get a little credit for ingenuity. But the mere *ipse dixit* and blank assertion of some nobody in an obscure weekly that authors whom we have always held in the highest esteem are destitute of genuine merit, will not be apt to shake them from their pedestals when they have been long and firmly established. Washington Irving, we are told, who only left us since the firing of the first gun at Sumter, is as stone-dead, as to his literary reputation, out of mind and forgotten, as if he had been gone for two hundred years. In this respect he is not distinguished a whit from the "school" of writers referred to whom "we all remember as forgotten." This will be news to Mr. Putnam, by whom his works are more briskly circulated in multiform editions than ever. Irving had much praise meted out to him of which he was undeserving. It was a mistake which is corrected at last, as he was a mere "imitator," and there was very little in him. His humor was copied after that of the Anne-Augustan age, and constantly alloyed by coarseness! Irving coarse! Hear! hear! Cooper too has passed on, and his works do follow him. His reputation was due to the ill-judged flattery of friends at home, and the "ignorance of foreign critics." "Among his unreadable books he has one or two in which are one or two characters which are original with him. They may be supposed natural, but it is hard to tell." Those great creations of his, admired in their freshness and novelty by the people of Europe as sometimes even transcending the genius of Scott, have disappeared like the "poor Indian," and the fame of Cooper is very dead. This will be news to many thousands who are constantly poring over his works and ordering the whole set, Monikins and all, for their libraries. It is a newspaper report, however, and we give it for what it is worth, as we receive it.

This new and self-constituted censor, or rather judge, who pretends to record a settled verdict finds it difficult to crowd into one classification all whom he would sink into oblivion

as Knickerbockers. He would like to include as owning allegiance to Irving as their "great master," if not to Cooper, prose writers, poets, and all who have been born or lived near that famous water the Tappan Zee. Some of them bear no resemblance to him, except in being copyists, or hardly in that, and he is driven to a few reserves and limitations. By a singular magnanimity Mr. Bryant is excepted, though he has never been far away from the "Zee," and the historian Bancroft. The stingy respect accorded to the first is, however, almost instantly withdrawn. Bryant, he thinks, is sad and dreary enough, and at best crowned only with funeral cypress. He is not free from "imitation," but he owns in fee simple all which he saw from an Indian mound—"The spirit of his poetry is a chill wind," which blows nobody any good—"which blows softly, not out of graveyards, certainly not—it hardly possesses so much of human interest as that—but over an area where lies the dust of disappeared races." And listen now to a most profound utterance! "The impression produced by his poetry is not a pleasant one, and therefore not in the highest sense pleasing." Remember that, O "obsolescent" Knickerbockers! and enquire diligently who is the author of that immortal saying, *than an impression which is not pleasant is not in the highest sense pleasing*. Mr. Bancroft fortunately came to the neighborhood of the Tappan Zee too late, and got away from it too early, to be registered among the Knickerbockers; consequently he still lives in the pages of history, and in foreign courts—a narrow escape—while Irving and the many who followed at an humble distance in his footsteps have sunk for ever in the dull pool of Lethe. Halleck lost his scanty laurels as he passed out of sight—Hoffman is no more "sparkling and bright"—Drake, too, went down, followed by Paulding and N. P. W. Only a few of the once jolly set patiently wait in the prime of life to be submerged—Clark, who had got in, but "came to the surface again the other day" and to the shore in characteristic fashion, still dispenses a few crumbs saved up from the Editor's Table; and Donald G. Mitchell, who "smacks of the school," had better look out; while Tuckerman, who it appears is likewise "booked" for a passage over the ferry, stands on the brink, a connecting link between the living and the dead. Such is the *unheard-of* mortality; and the upshot of the matter is—see our discriminating critic—that "imitation was the life and breath of the Knickerbocker literature, and that it" (that is to say, either imitation or the literature) "is pretty much dead"—and buried, if the undertaker has succeeded in his undertaking.

Seriously, while we have long needed in our country a sincere, just, independent, unbiassed, scholarly criticism, the one who can thus sweepingly condemn—thinking perhaps to start up into a full-blown Jeffrey—is only worthy of that contempt which he accords to his betters. There is an overweening self-conceit and assurance, *amabile frigus*—something most refreshingly cool—in this slap-off piece of folly which is as confused as to matter as it is here and there decidedly bad in grammar, though triumphant enough, as we have seen, in logic. "This is really too bad," once Jeffrey wrote. But while such dogmatic assertion coming from him might have cast a temporary blight over a poor sensitive poet whose works continue to be perused with pleasure, while his own—criticism and satire and poem—are little referred to, it is hardly to be presumed that Cooper, Irving, Halleck—a whole "school"—are going to have the pall pulled over their reputations by an unknown hand and to be everlastingly forgotten. It is, perhaps, time to meet this charge of imitation which, although stale and seldom reiterated by those who first made it, is now set forth by a native of the soil as if with the brilliancy of a new idea and, as he perhaps imagines, with an effect most stunning. Those who originated it were at least impartial, and did not invidiously apply it to any particular clique or "school" established among us. All who dipped pen in ink, Knickerbockers and those of the Mutual Admiration Society in other parts, have alike meekly borne it. Irving was after Addison, but Emerson was after Carlyle, and other people wrote all our books, as Byron unsuspectingly wrote *Fanny*, and *The London Athenæum* furnished an article for the New York weekly we have quoted.

English reviewers were at first surprised that we did not adopt the Choctaw language, or rather Mohawk, as knowing next to nothing about American tribes, and confounding us all with the tomahawking aborigines, they called us all by the common name of "Mohocks." Subsequently, while their ill-humor lasted, they became disgusted with utterances so like their own in "pure English, undefiled," as to seem parrot-like. They always had a hearty contempt for provincials, and even thought it sheer impertinence that any but themselves should have good manners, and that these last could not be other than a mere copy. What wonder that whenever a well-written book came out on this side they could hardly get rid of the idea that it was actual stealing, though it resembled their own authors no more than they (which, however, they had a perfect right to do) resembled one another. As we have said, they made no distinctions among us, but condemned all indiscriminately who dwelt in that whole extent of literary territory stretching from Tappan Zee to Passamaquoddy Bay, or the Bay of Penobscot. We were all happy together while they all thought ill of us alike. The fact is that the accusation against us was never made until it came with the force of an implied compliment, and American writers had attained to such perfection that they began to be called American Addisons, and what not, so strikingly did they bring to mind the great English originals. What ridiculous folly to demand

of us a continued succession of geniuses, every one to be distinct and *sui generis*. Downright originality in design, thought, and expression is as rare in England as it is here or elsewhere. Walt Whitman alone "yawps" in solitary distinction over the roofs; but every one cannot "yawp," and it is unreasonable to expect it. Neither do we think it desirable for any one who feels the inspiration within him to strive after what is utterly strange, but as a general thing always to work with the best models before him. Dr. Johnson, who, we take it, was endowed with as much common sense as our pseudo-critic, counselled all who would attain to a style pure, simple, and chaste, to give their days and their nights to the study of Addison. A mere slavish follower, who is tricked out in other men's apparel, and with nothing of his own, will be balked at the start, and can obtain no hold on public favor. Insensible polish is contracted from good associations, or from a determined adherence to some type of admitted excellence. Imitation, as charged upon us, has become a worn-out cant-word. They who can originate nothing are sometimes sharp in detecting actual resemblances of style, or chance identical expressions, which result naturally, and are well nigh unavoidable, from a genial intercourse with some one mind, or with many. With regard to our own authors—we mean "those who have contributed to what, speaking roughly, may be called the Knickerbocker literature"—we think of none, even the least of those so contemptuously mentioned, from whose works, however much may be winnowed out, there will not remain something which is bright and imperishable; not of a single one who, whatever may be his faults, is not, in some degree, stamped with individuality. He who can sneer at *Marco Bozzaris* as "obsolescent" is as destitute of heart, taste, and literary appreciation as he is regardless of truth when he has the audacity to assert that Cooper and Irving are already forgotten. If our community is not "wholly civilized," thank God, it is at least partially, as we trust there are few in it who would wantonly defame the dead, or tear away the laurels which they have rightly won, or spurn the rich legacy which they have bequeathed to us as the fruit of their genius, talents, or scholarship. We can forgive the envy which attacks the living, and respect any just, manly criticism of those now gone who may have received a larger share of commendation than the ultimate judgement of posterity will justify; but we can only despise such reckless statements as we have now cited, for he who would blow the blast of doom for so many who have been honorably distinguished in the annals of our times must be provided with something better than a penny trumpet.

NEW YORK, Jan. 1, 1868.

SPUYTEN DUYVIL.

#### DEMOCRACY, CARLYLE, AND WHITMAN.

[Concluded from No. 152.]

##### II.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: Property is always surer of protection than liberty. The tendency of all government is to make it of more consequence than humanity. Nearly all "the ills which flesh is heir to" (apart from the mere caprices of barbarous despotism) arise from the practical superiority which is given to capital, in its various forms, over manhood. There is no despot within the area of civilization who is so foolish as not to feel the necessity of protecting and fostering property. These evils are not the product of forms of government alone, they are the outcrop of society, the necessary result of the eternal law of inequality in ability and possessions, and are as incident to a democratic as to a despotic form. In refutation of this position the actual prosperity of the country will be marshalled as conclusive answer, and the old outcry will arise, "We are rich because we are democratic;" but is this true? Do we owe everything in our material advancement to our institutions? This is a question worth considering, not in the arrogant conceit which our people usually bring to it, but calmly, in a spirit sobered by the calamities of the last seven years, anxious because of the uncertainties of the present. We want no mouthing and "damnable iteration" of stump oratory and Fourth-of-July patriotism on this subject, none of the patting of our own heads, and dandlings of our pet theories, which have been the invariable beginning and end of all enquiry in this direction. We must have facts here, or else the entire affair will die away in the gabble and platitudes which Mr. Whitman has raised to the dignity of thunder by his sonorous repetition. We admit Russia could not attract the emigration which has filled our borders; but Russia was never, within the memory of modern civilization, the new world, dazzling with romance, tempting by riches, and proffering room in ungoverned solitudes. She was not explored and populated by nearly every stock in Europe. She did not burst upon an age of awakened knowledge and of restless enterprise, an age compact with all the elements which give impetus to the future of nations. To rear a republic here was a necessity, not a choice. The diversity of origin and of purposes of the early populations guaranteed this. The nature of the undertaking ensured it. The difficulty was to obtain a foot-hold—a difficulty so vast that, whether conquered by the Puritan or the Cavalier, by the Huguenot or the Catholic, it seems colossal, even in these days of grand projects and wonderful achievements. To make one beginning was to ensure others. The first step developed the strength for the second, and so the muscles of the nation were braced to the stalwart stride with which it has crossed

the continent. A foot-hold once secured, an empire must follow. Grants by different crowns, the efforts of manors and seignories, were only absurdities in the expanse between the Atlantic and the Pacific. The country with all its resources was open to all men of all nations—practically open despite the wrangles over boundaries and the jealousies of European crowns. The Dutch, French, English, Spaniards, men of all avocations, religions, and politics, and with all the purposes which can influence the human mind, were pioneers in the great work which even now continues to give the wilderness to civilization. To say that religious and civil liberty brought all these nations to our shores is untruth. These causes had their effects, and beneficent effects, no doubt; but while the Pilgrims grappled with the privations of New England, the Catholic missionary opened the Northwest to the world. The fur-traders and gold-hunters did much in the early work. There was nothing homogeneous in the various beginnings. To unite at all they must recognize the democratic element, by which alone different views of local government could have found voice. It was easier, for all these reasons, to a republic than that it would be now; but the necessities of overcrowded industry in Europe were the chief instrument in our material progress. The most which can be said of our institutions is, that they did not obstruct a current which in the nature of things must flow to us. The naturalization laws and the land system were not choice but necessity. We possessed a wilderness and needed men, and that tells the entire story.

One who has witnessed the process of populating a new country will ascribe less to institutions and more to men. He will wonder how any institution, any power, could preserve the wilds to solitude. Our free forms will cease to be a mystery to him, for he will see that no other forms could have existed among the pioneers of the land. A despotism, or monarchy of any nature, would be cheap and ridiculous among log-houses and stump-covered clearings still in the shadow of boundless forests. The miracle is not the free government, nor the swarming population (for nature everywhere rewards toil lavishly), but that so many men in other countries should be dissatisfied with their lot and under the necessity of seeking new homes.

From all this we deduce that it is an error to ascribe the general prosperity of the people to the democratic formula. We must seek its cause in the cheapness of land, in the variety of soil and climate, the richness of productions, and the necessities of old-world populations. We are not to esteem the entire happiness of life to consist in capacity to be elected justice of the peace, nor are we to be certain that, because we have that capacity, we will by force of it, and it alone, wax fat and ride through all generations. What the condition of the "average man" will be in the future, in that very period whose echoes Mr. Whitman seeks to awaken by his jubilant guffaw, is a question which other generations will be obliged to answer in fear and trembling. The democratic formula will not answer it, because the question involves whether he will have that formula in the days of overcrowded population, in that state of society to which this age of commerce, of money greed, is the prophetic pioneer. We confess that we cannot solve this question as cheerily as Mr. Whitman does. We do not discover the power to alter the tendency of society, and to prevent a reproduction here of the miseries which afflict man elsewhere.

The truth is, democracy is on trial. It has not passed the experimental stage. Whether it will maintain itself against the exigencies of our vast growth (and God grant it may) is a grave enquiry, fraught with perplexity and anxiety. As a people, we have indulged in too much of the Whitman species of faith, and expected our freedom to shine upon us like the sun, in obedience to a law which executes itself. This expectation has allowed us to drift into a war which has shaken our political edifice from turret to foundation. It has reduced us very near to the bane of all freedom, military pursuits and glory. It has produced actual despotism in half the country. It has confused the popular mind as to what are popular rights and thrown the people into a struggle to return to the Constitution which is the only embodiment of the democratic formula. A sad outlook this for the permanency and efficiency of our system. Are we an example or a warning?

We may join Mr. Whitman in his eulogium of the heroism and endurance of the people in the late war, but cannot adopt his conviction that they are evidence of their devotion to the democratic principle. Splendid as they are, radiant with glory and pregnant with pride as the record is, they cannot out-dazzle the black page upon our history. He claims, as an American should, for his praise, the pluck and prowess of the entire people, South as well as North. We do the same. We take the naked stuff of which the nation (not a section) is composed, and honor its courage and stamina; but the omens of the war overshadow all the glory, because we have learned in the school of democracy no higher lesson than the teaching of despotism—the law of brute force. Mr. Whitman takes the popular view of the subject in the lusty applause he showers on the termination of the conflict. We have no quarrel with him for that, because that termination was desirable, necessary, right; but after all, it was obvious from the beginning—so obvious that we are discouraged to know that a part of the nation made so ignorant use of the power of self-government as to precipitate the struggle; but this is not the point from whence to contemplate the efficacy of the democratic ele-

ment. That the strong should conquer the weak, that legitimate government should suppress rebellions, is not the peculiar teaching of republics. The great point is, that the democratic formula did not of itself make us so wise as a people as to keep out of this horrible business of fratricidal war. Besides, the end is not yet. If bloodshed told the tale, if with the last shot the last danger had been conquered, we might well rend the heavens with paeans of self-praise, but all the questions are opened. The elements are in issue. The very creed of self-government is on trial. Five military commanders rule nearly half the states. In the other half the local governments, which are the most democratic part of our democratic formula, are under a cloud, shame-faced, furtive, disclaiming their sovereignty, in various ways doing homage to Mr. Whitman's idea of "solidarity." The tendency of affairs is not democratic; it is despotic. To take power from the people, to lodge it in boards and commissions, to create privileged classes, to do more for property and less for flesh and blood, is the habit of the day. Great clamor of popular rights, of equality of men, and all the other verbal ambushes of treason against self-government, do not alter these facts. The "charity business" Mr. Whitman complains of, the taking care of the people, leading them, forcing them, is very prevalent. We look in vain for a symptom, even, of that "scientific estimate and reverent appreciation" of them, which he seems to think necessary. Whether rightfully or wrongfully we will not determine, a great party conceives that there is a necessity to violate the rule of local self-government on various pretences. Mr. Whitman may justify this by the "something" he says men are. He may see in it the radiation of this truth, "that the last, best dependence is to be on humanity itself, and its own inherent, normal, full-grown qualities, without any superstitious support whatever;" but we only see that for the time being another formula, not democratic but despotic, is in force. Granted that the end to be attained is right, we have the greatest evil which can befall a free government, violation of the principles which constitute local freedom.

If this be true, Mr. Whitman proclaims the praises of a deity whose shrine is crumbling before sacrilegious hands. We are not working from his formula, but against it. If he or any man has a mission on this subject, it is to say that. The beautiful theory is attenuated over an expanse of hard facts (facts which in our blind braggadocio spirit we have suffered to grow under it), attenuated, we say, by enormous debt, burdensome taxation, demoralization of war, military ideas, high prices of living, irredeemable currency, confused ideas on fundamental questions of power, vexed problems between capital and labor, and scarcity of work in many departments of life. These are questions to be grappled with, in behalf of and for the relation of the democratic principle; and formula, however grandiloquently announced, cannot fight the battle. Indeed formula, shouting through Mr. Whitman's lips, the "something" a man is, "standing apart from all else," is impotent to make man what he ought to be, standing as he does, surrounded by all else, merged, overwhelmed, struggling in the accidents of his actual condition. This "average man" in his tendency to be led, in his necessity to suffer, in his certainty to carry the loads modern civilization casts upon him, cannot be fed upon the thin air of the "something" Mr. Whitman eulogizes as "sole and untouchable by any canons of religion, politics, or what is called modesty or art." There is no such "something" in a human being, socially considered. To be "untouchable" in this broad sense is to be isolated, to be in a position where all Mr. Whitman considers is unworthy of consideration—because democracy has no significance save as the governing power of man in his intercourse with his fellows.

If we are right in these views, is the jubilant shout and prophecy of Mr. Whitman philosophical? Is not the real question for a philosopher, "Can we preserve our democracy?" instead of "What will democracy achieve if preserved?" Of what good to dazzle Carlyle abroad with a utopian mirror of the future, when the present is full of peril to even that much of democracy we have now? Has one a right to hang out false lights to a drowning wretch? Can the "coming man" of American literature justify this war-dance clamor of future triumphs of an experiment imperilled now? Is not "democracy in silence biding its time," "pondering its own ideas not of men only but of women," which is the demand of the moment; but a speaking, acting democracy—earnest, not melodramatic; uncompromising, disdaining to glib and smooth over the assaults to which it is daily subjected. What is needed is not prophecy, however exalted, obscure, or stage-hero-like in tone; but alarm cries ringing through the land and bidding the people fly to the rescue of imperilled liberty. I am, sir, etc.,

WAYNE.

DECEMBER 15, 1867.

#### WOULD AND SHOULD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: The tone with which Mr. Cragin dismisses a discussion of his own seeking, would become him better if he had the best of the argument. But, so far from having the best of it, he has literally none of it. His part, or side, of the question is a simple and not very civil assertion of his own opinion unsupported by any other opinion except Mr. Moon's—of which, indeed, it is a mere echo. And both Mr. Moon's and his are unsustained by any argument or authority. That style of writing—for it is not even discus-

sion—deserves no reply, in itself considered. But as Mr. Cragin's opinion is, to a certain extent, accredited by the fact of its appearing in *The Round Table*; and as, in his second letter, Mr. Cragin coolly assumes that he has proved a general misuse of the word "would" by American writers, I am disposed to show on what that assumption is founded.

In *The Round Table* of September 21, Mr. Cragin says:

"Mr. Moon has referred to this peculiarity in American writers, in one of his recent *Criticisms*. This vulgarism is getting to be an intolerable nuisance. 'I would very much like to see,' say half the persons you converse with, and nine-tenths of the writers who figure so luminously in our daily prints—meaning, of course, 'I should like.'"

The italics are mine.

As my use of "would" is the American usage specified by Mr. Moon, that is necessarily the usage referred to by Mr. Cragin. I therefore took his above quoted remarks as addressed to myself; and in *The Round Table* of October 5, I said this, among other things, in reply:

"As neither Mr. Moon nor Mr. Cragin gives any reason for his position, and as each rests his case on his own dictum, without any authority or argument to support it, I might deny the two averments and leave the two gentlemen to sustain them by something more than averments, if they can. But they are both 'a long way off,' and I will present my own views of the case in advance, and await their rejoinders if they are disposed to make any."

And I then *show*, at least to my own satisfaction, that my use of the word is correct.

In *The Round Table* of October 19, Mr. G. W. Eveleth replied to Mr. Cragin in an elaborate, exhaustive, and altogether conclusive essay, which thoroughly disposed of Mr. Cragin's opinion. Mr. Cragin tacitly admits that Mr. Eveleth's argument is unanswerable by not attempting to answer it.

But what, however, *does* Mr. Cragin? Does he wisely hold his peace and allow the case to go against him by default? Not he! He relies on palavering the jury in this fashion:

*The Round Table*, November 30:

"I had supposed that the error, when committed by professed scholars, was simply an inadvertence, and that it would be conceded to be such as soon as pointed out; but to my surprise these gentlemen, Messrs. Gould and Eveleth, appear to look upon my strictures as mere moonshine, and to evince a disposition to argue the matter. To that I cannot consent. Thumbing horn-books and delving among the roots and intricate niceties of syntax would constitute a task that is quite apart from my present humor. . . . If my opponents cannot be made to believe in Macaulay, etc., neither would they be persuaded," etc.

The italics are mine; and I will briefly refer to the italicized words in their order.

Mr. Cragin speaks of "the error," when no error has been shown. He is "surprised" that Mr. Eveleth and myself have so little respect for "his strictures." What strictures? He has made none. His strictures, in the proper sense of the word, are just what we have called for; but, like Shakespeare's "spirits," "they will not come." Does Mr. Cragin think that his unsupported opinion is a "stricture"? I think that even Mr. Moon could tell him, *stricture* means "adverse criticism." Is his mere opinion criticism? He "cannot consent to argue the matter," because argument, "thumbing horn-books, etc., are apart from his present humor!" Verily, that is the superlative of magisterial assurance. Mr. Cragin's former "humor" allowed him to accuse me, or somebody, of ignorance in the matter of "would"; and when he is called on to substantiate his charge, the task of substantiating "is apart from his present humor!" And, finally, "if we will not believe Macaulay," What does the man mean? How "believe Macaulay?" Believe what in Macaulay? He has not quoted Macaulay. Does Macaulay's mere name, without Macaulay's language, decide a point in philology? However, Mr. Cragin cannot escape Macaulay, though he declines to quote him.

I have just now on my table *Junius*, Macaulay's *Miscellanies*, and a late number of *The Edinburgh Review*.

*Junius* says, in his preface, "If any honest man should still be inclined to leave the construction of libels to the court, I would entreat him to consider," etc. "If it were my misfortune," etc., "I would not scruple to declare to him," etc.

*The Edinburgh Review* says, "We would rather try to believe that the commissioners were enlightened and honest men."

Macaulay says, "We would rather assist our political adversaries to drink with us at that fountain of intellectual pleasure," etc. (*Essay on Dryden*). "We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men," etc. (*Essay on Milton*).

Now, if Mr. Cragin will *show* wherein the "would" of the above quoted sentences differs from the use that he affects to condemn; and, especially if he will *show* wherein either the use above quoted or the use that he condemns is actually wrong; he may escape the imputation of arbitrarily, wantonly, and wrongfully accusing other writers of error.

Mr. Cragin makes a show of arguing or illustrating something about "will"; but "would" is the word that he and Mr. Moon designated; "would" is the word which they accuse me of misusing; and "would" is the word to which I have, now and previously, limited my replies.

EDWARD S. GOULD.

[Mr. Gould writes us that he thinks the second part of his criticism on *The Dean's English* should in justice be published, as it is necessary to its completeness. We shall, therefore, at an early day, print the part referred to, which, so far as these columns are concerned, must end the controversy of which it is a portion.—ED. ROUND TABLE.]

## REVIEWS.

All books designed for review in THE ROUND TABLE must be sent to this office.

## SOME RECENT POETRY.\*

MEDIOCRE poets, says Horace, neither gods, nor men, nor the booksellers tolerate—an assertion that if the fat little Epicurean had been prophet as well as bard he would scarcely have ventured to write in immortal characters. Time and tastes have sadly changed, and nowadays, however the gods may regard them, from men and booksellers, at least, mediocre poets get not only sufferance but encouragement. How much encouragement, one need not ask who has heard Mr. Tupper mildly boast that his philosophic muse instructs and brightens every quarter of the habitable globe, or knows what general if uncritical admiration has rewarded the amiable platitudes and orthodox stupidity of Dr. Holland's *Kathrina*. In fact, mediocrity in poetry as in everything else is sure to be more popular than excellence, for the simple reason that it appeals to a wider appreciation. Tennyson and Longfellow are read so universally not because they are charming poets, but because it is fashionable to read them, while Robert Browning and Matthew Arnold, who are in some respects superior to either of them, are comparatively neglected because their beauties, not lying on the surface, require more mental mining than most readers of poetry are willing to give. There is something to be said, too, on the other side of the question. In things so generally admired there must be something that is good, and doubtless even in *Proverbial Philosophy* diligent search might reveal some jewel, some crystal of the many that Mr. Tupper assures us are so constantly throbbing in his Beautiful Brain, which should seem worthy of the extended reputation of its author. It is only on some such principle that we can account for the vast amount of poetry which is continually inflicted on the hapless critic, and which he knows from bitter experience must be mediocre when it is not below mediocrity. Nothing is more offensively exasperating, nothing better calculated to arouse the most unrelenting ire of that much-enduring being, than the gilded daintiness and obtrusive modesty of a new volume of poems. Under nearly a score of these eye-sores our table is groaning as we write. Most of them we have read carefully and with the conscientious desire to do justice to the authors' abilities and the publishers' judgement, and to elicit the grain of wheat which the most hopeless bushel of chaff is sure to yield to energetic winnowing. And we are glad to be able to record our conviction that they are, as a whole, much superior to any similar collection that has outraged us before—in fact, above the average of mediocrity, and in one or two cases absolutely showing unusual merit.

Of course from these remarks Mr. Morris's *Jason* is to be excluded. Whatever admiration can be given to symmetry of conception and exquisite art of execution that charming poem is fully entitled to. From the rugged quarry of mythological legend Mr. Morris has hewn a statue of such light and graceful beauty, glowing with such warmth of color, rounded into such delicacy of outline, as suggests even more forcibly than his subject the elder and better times of classic art. He has taken a classic story and, without departing in a single instance from accuracy of detail, has told it in such a way as to give it all modern interest. This of itself is no ordinary praise, but still greater skill is shown in the subtle infusion of Greek spirit in a poem which suggests throughout a mediæval story-teller with modern habits of thought. It is as if Chaucer, or still more nearly Spenser (for to him rather than to the earlier poet do we think Mr. Morris's genius akin), had been endued at once with the imagination of an ancient Greek and the intellect of a modern Englishman. *Jason* is Greek in its intense objectiveness, which only the opening of the seventeenth book momentarily interrupts; in a certain subdued, indefinable, suggested pathos which imbues the whole, which seems to lurk in the very cadence of the verse; in its symmetry, its simplicity, its straightforwardness; it is mediæval in the manner of its telling; it is modern in its delicate analysis of the workings of love, in its pictures of natural scenery, in occasional conceits of fancy like that on page 239:

"But to the chamber, where there lay alone  
The wise Medea, up the faint grey stone

\* 1. *The Life and Death of Jason: A Poem.* By William Morris. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1867.

2. *The Hermitage, and other Poems.* By Edward Rowland Sill. New York: Leypoldt & Holt. 1868.

3. *Poems.* By Charles Warren Stoddard. San Francisco: A. Roman & Co. 1867.

4. *Poems.* By Elizabeth C. Kinney. New York: Hurd & Houghton. 1867.

5. *The Sexton's Tale, and other Poems.* By Theodore Tilton. New York: Sheldon & Co. 1867.

6. *Minding the Gap, and other Poems.* By Mollie E. Moore. Houston, Texas: Cushing & Cave. 1867.

7. *Poems of Faith, Hope, and Love.* By Phoebe Cary. New York: Hurd & Houghton. 1868.

8. *Antarctic Mariner's Song.* By James Croxall Palmer, U.S.N. New York: D. Van Nostrand. 1868.

9. *The Colonades: A Poem.* By Benjamin Blood. Author's private edition. Amsterdam, N. Y.: 1868.

10. *Sir Paven and Saint Paven.* By E. Foxton, author of *Herman*; or, *Young Knighthood*. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1867.

11. *An Old Man's Prayer.* By George M. Baker. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1868.

Two rose trees climbed, along a trellis led,  
And with their wealth of flowers white and red  
Another garden of the window made."

Jason's yearning for his discarded love is conceived and told quite in the modern spirit, and this delicious sketch is drawn in such colors as Orpheus would scarcely have used:

"Oh, the sweet valley of deep grass!  
Where through the summer stream doth pass  
In chain of shadow and deep pool,  
From misty morn to evening cool;  
Where the black ivy creeps and twines  
O'er the dark-armed, red-trunked pines,  
Whence clattering the pigeon flits,  
Or, brooding o'er her thin eggs, sits,  
And every hollow of the hills  
With echoing song the mavis fills.  
There by the stream, all unafraid,  
Shall stand the happy shepherd maid,  
Alone in first of sunlit hours:  
Behind her, on the dewy flowers,  
Her homespun woolen raiment lies,  
And her white limbs and sweet grey eyes  
Shine from the calm green pool and deep,  
While round about the swallows sweep,  
Not silent; and would God that we  
Like them were landed from the sea" (p. 208).

Nor does it seem so much a Greek as an English landscape that the same sweet singer gives us two pages further on:

"The risen moon is gathering light,  
And yellow from the homestead while  
The windows gleam."

Space fails us to say all that we have in mind to say of this remarkable poem; we can only repeat again our admiration and our gratitude for what has proved an intellectual treat sufficient to balance the *desagrégens* of even worse poetasting than is given in the rest of its companions.

Of these the best come to us from California. In *The Hermitage* Mr. Sill has given us a poem of unusual and hopeful merit, thoughtful, imaginative, earnest, marked by considerable verbal felicity, and at times by such clear and accurate reasoning as in this concise and admirable summary of fate and free will:

"Is God not wise  
To rule the world he could devise?  
Yet see thou, though the realm be his,  
He governs it by deputies.  
Enough to know of Chance and Luck,  
The stroke we choose to strike is struck;  
The deed we slight will slighted be  
In spite of all Necessity.  
The Parac's web of good and ill  
They weave with human shuttles still,  
And fate is fate through man's free will."

With the man who can put such lines as these into a first book we may look forward to a future and better acquaintance. The most noticeable fault in the book is, beside a certain vagueness of expression, an occasional extravagance of conceit, as in this letter from a lover to his mistress, which, if she had been a sensible woman, she would have tossed in the fire, as he suggests, before reading three lines:

"Dear soul, if I am mad to speak with thee,  
And this faint glimmer which I call a hope  
Be but the corpse-light in the grave of hope—  
If thou, O Darling Star, art in the west  
To be my Evening-star, and watch my day  
Fade slowly into desolate twilight, burn  
This folly in the flames; and scattered with  
Its ashes let my madness be forgot.  
But if not so, oh! be my Morning-star,  
And crown my East with splendor; come to me."

Nor does Mr. Sill, from his laborious diving in that ocean of analogies which Dr. Holmes speaks of, bring up always pearls. But, taken all in all, he is much the strongest and most original American poet that we have had to welcome for many a day, and one, if for nothing more than his unusual preference of ideas to mere prettinesses of fancy, whose future career we shall contemplate with confident interest.

His comrade and rival in the generous lists of poesy, who comes to us in all the gorgeous blazonry of press-work which the Golden State can furnish, Mr. Charles Warren Stoddard, we cannot so unreservedly praise. The extravagant adulation with which his advent was greeted by the California press prepared us to expect something more substantial than the graceful echoes of an alien lyre, which Mr. Stoddard gives us for original verse. The volume shows much facility, a fertile fancy, and full acquaintance with poetic phraseology, and when he has shaken off the incubus of imitation which paralyzes the wings of his muse she may carry him into clearer and fresher skies. Until then he must be content with the praise of having done extremely well what Tennyson has done so infinitely better as to make it not at all worth repeating. Yet from this sentence we must except the charming little poem entitled *In the Desert*, with which most of our readers are doubtless familiar, and which is a study of life-like and graphic beauty.

Admirers of Mr. E. C. Stedman will be glad to welcome in another of his family much of the same poetic gift. Mrs. Kinney's poems show facility of expression and true poetic feeling, and many of her sonnets are well constructed and suggestive. *Spring Rain* is a somewhat striking treatment of a trite subject, and many other of the shorter poems are graceful and tender. Mrs. Kinney writes everywhere like a lady of delicacy and culture, and, what is still more, like a true woman.

Mr. Theodore Tilton has long been known to fame as one of the very best writers of baby poetry since the days of the admired and lamented Mother Goose. His exquisite lyric on *The Fly*, on which we have already exhausted the vocabulary of eulogy, and which readers will be greatly gratified to learn, from a note in the present volume, has been set to music by Lowell Mason, and may be sung also to the tune of *Lightly Row*, is really one of the most delicious bits of nursery rhyming we have ever failed to read. One cannot help envying that lucky Baby Bye (qu. Boy?) who could inspire so lovely an effort. *The Two Hungry Kittens*, though open to the charge of plagiarism from the elder bard, is almost equally good, and for very young babies we know no better literature. In the more serious walks of poetry, Mr. Tilton is scarcely so successful, though his poetry is better than his theology, which is irredeemably bad. *The Great Bell Roland*, however, just misses being spirited; and, with a great deal that is stupid and commonplace, there is so much in his book that is really good as to make us believe him, once he shall have freed himself from the depressing influence of *The Independent*, capable of writing very decent verse. Of course, we do not mean to imply that his present verse is at all indecent—far from it; in this respect, at least, his book is irreproachable, and may safely be admitted into any Christian family. The slightly unorthodox tendency of one or two of the poems is so neutralized by their unreadableness as to make them comparatively innocuous.

Even in Texas, despite General Sheridan's scandalous preference for another and warmer country, the muses have found an abiding place. Miss Mollie E. Moore, whose intellectual countenance gives an added charm to her book, is favored of their smiles and gives us the result of their inspiration in a rather compact 12mo volume of two hundred and forty pages, called *Minding the Gap*. Though none of her poems display startling brilliancy, and show a somewhat unpleasant recklessness of such minor points of artistic embellishment as rhythm, and, occasionally, grammar, and although Miss Moore's colors are a little too pronounced for our subdued taste, her deep, deep gloom too harrowing, her red, red blood too gory—though she does talk about *perairies* and "*flinchless files*"—nevertheless her verses have merit and show considerable reading. Naturally, they are a good deal taken up with the praise of Texan valor and Texan beauty and Texan superiority generally; but apart from this pardonable exuberance of state pride, and the somewhat humiliating comparison which Miss Moore is delicate enough to suggest rather than express, there is not much to offend the most severely patriotic mind. Many of the lines are spirited, and if the ideas are not very new, the rhymes are mostly accurate. In one respect Miss Moore's example might be profitably followed by more pretentious bards. With rare consideration she has bethought herself to print all her best things in italics, thereby saving critic and reader the trouble of hunting them out. Our gratitude can best be evinced by one or two quotations. In a very vigorous sketch of *The Battle of Galveston*, where, by the way, it may gratify the future historian of that mighty conflict to know that "*Cœur de Lion* led the van" and that his "*battle-word* clashed the air," Miss Moore tells us how

"Like tigers all athirst for blood our gunboats left the shore,  
And greedily they lapped the tide made warm by mingled gore.  
They sought the white-sailed strangers with a peal of stormy drums;  
And waves that lashed their sombre hulks were crowned with crimson plumes;  
And the deadly New Year's greeting rattled wildly on the breeze,  
Sent to the mad usurpers by our Rangers on the seas!"

Here, in spite of a certain confusing vagueness of expression which leaves the reader in doubt as to whether it was the "breeze" or the "greeting" that was "sent to the mad usurpers," in spite of the premature appearance of the "mingled gore," and an inevitable and disagreeable tendency resulting from the peculiarity of the rhyme to "crown the waves with crimson plumes," instead of "plumes," as Miss Moore graphically suggests—in spite of all this we cannot fail to recognize, once it is pointed out, the felicity of the metaphor, the stirring beauty of the entire picture. The boldness of comparing the greedy gunboats to an animal so blood-thirsty and so ultra-marine, if we may use the term, as the tiger, we need not pause to point out. Again, after deprecating the gleaming monuments, and "brave old strains for the Victor-dead," and mournfully asking "Where are the shrines for our conquered and our slain?" Miss Moore continues italicizing with striking effect and the unerring instinct of the true poet:

"For our lost no gleaming monument,  
For our loved no martial song;  
But God—if there be a God above—  
He judges the right and wrong!"

We think we do not overstep the bounds of legitimate critical enthusiasm in venturing to call this fine. There is much more, too, that is quite as fine as this. Nevertheless, we would advise Miss Moore not to mind what we have in the beginning of this article said about a certain mistake of one Horace, but to heedfully regard another and truer maxim of that immortal bard, which we will quote for her benefit:

"—siquid tamen olim

Scripseris, in Meti descendat iudicis aures,  
Et patris, et nostras, nonumquam prematur in annum,

*Membris intus positis. Delere licet  
Quod non edideris; nescit vox missa reverti.*

Nine or ten years from now she may see the wisdom of this counsel, and perhaps write none the worse poetry for following it.

Miss Phœbe Cary's notions about *Hope, Faith, and Love* are such as almost every woman thinks or feels, but which only a few can so sweetly express. Always pleasing in her sentiment, and sometimes graceful, though quite as often awkward, in her diction, she will be read most appreciatively and admiringly by those who sympathize most fully with her tender and emotional nature—by women more than men, and by those women who have learned how to suffer without repining. The best of the poems are *Many Mansions, Complaint, and True Love*, which are very happy in conception and wording; incomparably the worst are the silly trash about "my love's eyes, who, behold, hath dove's eyes," and the still more idiotic nonsense on the subject of Lady Marjory's hot head and cold feet. These and one or two more of the same sort are unworthy of the author, and Miss Cary would do well to omit them from any future edition.

Lieutenant Palmer's *Antarctic Mariner's Song*, very handsomely dressed by the publisher, is just about what we would expect from its title and authorship. There is nothing to praise and little to condemn. The versification is good and the ideas are not startling. Its typographical daintiness and general unexceptionableness make it a very good book to give away to people not passionately or critically fond of the higher flights of poetry.

*The Colonnades*, by Mr. Blood, is a work of a higher order, and merits closer attention than we can give it now. The plan seems suggested by the *Inferno*, or the *Somnium Scipionis*, representing the poet straying in a dream through Hades, and meeting the spirits of defunct bards, who entertain him with their opinions, in their various styles, which are very cleverly imitated. There is much originality throughout, and the book, which is privately printed, does credit to the author's liberality and taste.

Miss (or is it Mrs., or yet Mr.? we blush to ask) Foxton, the author of *Herman*; or, *Young Knighthood*, has written a very pleasing ballad entitled *Sir Paven and St. Paven*, illustrating the conversion of a knightly soul to Christianity in much the same way that the young Spanish cavalier, Ignatius de Loyola, was brought to exchange knightly spurs for friar's sandals. Sir Paven, wounded, seeks refuge in a convent, where grace reaches his heart, and he lays aside his sinful ways, but is required to make atonement for the crime of selling his servitor into bondage. For years he wanders over the earth seeking to find and redeem him, and at last, discovering him in Algerine captivity, buys his victim's freedom with his own, and is rewarded by instant death. So,

"To wrest him out of Satan's hands,  
His charity sufficed;  
He did it unto one of CHRIST'S—  
He did it unto CHRIST!"

The tale is simply and vigorously told, and the moral plainly enforced.

*An Old Man's Prayer*, by George M. Baker, is, we are told in the preface, "a simple story which will be recognized by many in New England to whom the author has had the pleasure of reciting it. Frequent requests," etc., etc., account for its present appearance. As the author modestly confesses himself "painfully conscious of its defects as a literary work," we shall only applaud his clear-sightedness, and add, for the information of other sections of the country less favored than New England, that it is a temperance poem, and about as good as temperance poems in general.

#### THE FRIENDSHIPS OF WOMEN.\*

MR. ALGER, amid the demands upon his time of a city pastorate, has done not a little honest literary work. It has met with fair appreciation from the public. His *Poetry of the Orient*, a little unpretentious introduction to Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic poetry, has reached a third edition, and conveys as good an impression of the motives and signs of the Eastern imagination as its fragmentary excerpts, not always felicitously though attentively translated, could be expected to do. His *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, now in its fifth edition, is a vast agglomeration of material clearly apportioned, but not so clearly put into serviceable sentences. Indeed, Mr. Alger's habits of thought are not such as fit him peculiarly for the clearest expression of his brain-work. His mind is a storehouse of fancies, and when he breaks it out in a new book it delivers as incongruous neighbors as ever Jean Paul's did. He doats on metaphors. They are always a good filter to arrest the grossnesses of language, yet when the thought does not pass through them to clarify, but is compounded with them, we have rather the iridescence of foul waters than the sparkle of clear. Goldsmith has somewhere spoken of this rainbow manner as indicating the soap-bubble, that is brightest when it is going to break into

nothingness. No one can have read Mr. Alger's books and think we have any intention of pushing our conceit to such an extreme in regard to him. We respect faithful work and discriminating investigation too highly to cast it aside for any manipulation of externals that do not comport with our taste—a tribunal one is always, or should be, chary of confidence in. The glass vessel is as useful whether cut under the emery wheel or pressed with the mould. To our mind the plain, sharply defined facets of the one offer a brilliant simplicity that is poorly counterbalanced by the embossed intricacies and shapes of the other.

This manner of Mr. Alger's, however, is well ingrained. It enters into his ways of conceiving a subject, into his processes of development, into his setting of the completion. His *Genius of Solitude*, now also in a fifth edition, and the book before us, the last two he has published, show the same thing, and we do not suppose any amount of adverse criticism on this point will avail in the future. It is something like the Ethiop's skin and the tiger's spots, and as he is not likely to live long enough to out-limit one of Mr. Darwin's periods, the laws of the development of species will hardly produce a change in him. It is not at all certain that a change would be a gain, and it is oftener better that a man should do a thing his own way than not do it at all. Mr. Alger's industry is worth much, however it may be envied. Expletives may annoy, but they are easily skipped. The essential merit of his books outweighs much else that attaches to them. What is magnetic in them does not the less work healthful impulses because it draws about them the iron-filings of his workshop.

*The Friendships of Women* grew, as he tells us, out of the amassment of material for a *History of Friendship*, which, by the way, is one of those subjects that Mr. Alger will succeed in *indexing* capitally, for the behoof of all hereafter interested in it, if he finds the time to complete it. We do not know that we read his present volume any more pleasurably because he intimates in his preface that something was needed at this time to disabuse the popular mind of the omnipotence of the sentiment of love, and to let it know that there are in human nature other feelings which ought to share its predominance in our life and literature. The book has no such sentimental value to us. We have read it simply as a *catalogue raisonné* of famous instances which has given us entertainment, insight into character, and a peculiar half-complacent enjoyment that we always feel when let into the intimacy of the private life of people outside our sphere. We cannot say but there will be a large number, "Denied the satisfactions of impassioned love," who will be "grateful for a book which shows them what rich and noble resources" there are in friendship; but we doubt if that class of impressive souls will make Mr. Alger's volume a hand-book of the science. We wish they might; but Platonic love, we fancy, will not grow from any prepared seed, notwithstanding "there were never so many morally baffled, uneasy, and complaining women on the earth as now," according to Mr. Alger, who somehow has observed "an obscure mist of sighs exhalant out of the solitude of women in the nineteenth century."

The subject is blocked out with the care that always distinguishes Mr. Alger's survey of the field. The discussion of his opening question, *Have Women no Friendships?* and his reflections upon the sentiment inside and outside the ties of blood, and upon the relation of parents and children, are not the most satisfactory portions of his book. There is much in them too obvious for repetition, and his style is always the worse for not being ballasted by his facts. It is a trait with him, derived perhaps from his ministration in the pulpit, where the lowest intelligences must be made to feel in a measure they are addressed, that too little is left to the reader's perceptions, and his imagination is too conspicuously forestalled. There is usually little complaint to be made of Mr. Alger's reasons or his conclusions; but one secret of making an attractive book is, that it should assist the reader's mind in the formative process, and not take the action entirely out of its grasp.

The friendships of mothers and sons derive ample illustration from Cornelia and the Gracchi down. It is one of the holiest associations. The narration of it is always endearing. That of daughters and fathers is sometimes more picturesque, oftentimes romantic, and in some instances, like that of Burr and Theodosia, and Necker and De Staël, clothed with associations of historic importance. In sisters and brothers, when they are signal examples of this affection, we get, as Mr. Alger says, a contrast and a zest that intensifies the relation. Studies or labors shared between them never seem more worthy of human attention. Herschel and his sister sublimated even the science they illustrated. And what impulses spring at the mention of Wordsworth and Dorothy, and of Charles and Mary Lamb? There have been noble dependences, invigorating sympathies between husbands and wives, and the world has reaped the harvest of their joint labors; but there seems something so natural in it, and it is so difficult to separate the outgrowth of love from the sentiment itself, that the relation does not attract in the same manner as the others. "Love and

friendship are properly not antagonists, but coadjutors," says our author. "The former should never exist without the ennobling companionship and clarifying mixture of the latter. But there are numberless instances in which, while the former is impossible or would be wrong, the latter is abundantly capable of nurture, and would prove a boon of unspeakable solace." This brings him to Platonic love—the old problem—and any Gordian way of disposing of it is not much to Mr. Alger's mind. It is the longest section of his book, taking a full third of its pages, and we will not abridge it, but refer the reader to the satisfactory list of examples which Mr. Alger makes out. We have not space to more than enumerate the heads of his succeeding chapters on the friendships of mothers and daughters, of sisters, of woman with woman, and of pairs of female friends; but his concluding section on the needs and duties of women in this age must detain us a moment. It is the best thought-out part of his book and not extravagant, if, in some particulars, unsupported by general opinion. The question of woman's rights he considers in a manner that would neither satisfy Mrs. Dall nor find full compliance in a conservative mind. He arrives at a distinction, if he does not accord an entire difference, and we suspect the practical answering of the problem, if it ever comes to receive one, will be based on some such proposition as Mr. Alger sets forth.

#### LIBRARY TABLE.

*MY PRISONS. Memoirs of Silvio Pellico. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1868.*—To those who yet entertain sanguine hopes of the ultimate consolidation and prosperity of Italy, whose sympathies have been awakened for her interrible struggles for civil and religious freedom, the history of one whose enthusiastic love of liberty procured for him life-long suffering, amounting almost to martyrdom, in the cause, cannot fail to be invested with deep though mournful interest. The writings of Silvio Pellico—which, during the last five-and-thirty years have been widely circulated throughout the civilized world, and are now most appropriately revived—have done much to rouse and sustain that desire for independence, that yearning to throw off the last ties of feudalism, and that hopeful valor which inspires his countrymen to-day; and to the influence of his writings may be in great measure attributed the feeling of utter execration entertained by all enlightened nations for Austria and her government.

Early in life Silvio Pellico acquired enviable celebrity as a poet, and in his literary career became associated in terms of intimate friendship with some of the leading minds of Europe. But his broad and comprehensive views, combined with his hatred of oppression, forbade him to linger in the regions of poetic fancy; he connected himself with a liberal journal in Milan and the articles contributed by him to that publication caused his arrest and imprisonment. In an introduction to the present work—written by Mr. Epes Sargent, wherein he pays that graceful tribute to the memory of the hero which one poet knows so well to render to another—we find the following account of that association in which the spirit of revolution was cherished and strengthened until its power was felt and dreaded by the conservators of ancient rule throughout the land:

"The league of the *Carbonari*, to which Pellico and his friends were supposed to belong, was a secret political association formed or revived in Italy soon after the fall of Napoleon and the return of the Bourbons to power, with the resumption of the system of espionage, secret trials, onerous taxes, censorship, and ecclesiastical privileges under the enforcement of Austrian bayonets. The aspirations of the league were revolutionary and toward a republic. Its name is from *Carbonaro*, a coal-man. Its origin is uncertain, but is said to have been among charcoal-burners, whose occupation afforded facilities for secret meetings. The *Carbonari* adopted charcoal as a symbol of purification, and took for a motto, 'Revenge upon the wolves who devour the lambs.' The place where they assembled was called the *baracca*, or collier's hut."

The story of Pellico's imprisonment is told with simplicity and directness; it is a sad and touching record of despotic cruelty, of human endurance, of Christian resignation. His earnest, truth-seeking character is especially discernible in those portions of his book which tell of his gradual awakening to a sense of the truth and beauty of religion. In one place he says:

"While making these reflections I renewed my intention of identifying with religion all my thoughts concerning human affairs, all my opinions on the progress of civilization, my philanthropy, love of my country—in short, all the passions of my mind."

For his friends, whose mental sympathies he shared, for whose sufferings he grieved more than for his own, his affection was unbounded, and even in the lowest and most ignorant of those with whom he came in contact his tender feeling and characteristic charity led him to discern a soul of goodness. As a poet and dramatic author, Silvio Pellico had high claims to posthumous fame; but not on these works, though great their deserving, will his future reputation rest, but on this tragic record of his own pure life, his noble endurance, his elevating and humanizing thought.

*Paris in 1867; or, The Great Exposition. By Henry Merford. New York: G. W. Carleton & Co. 1867.*—Thanks to steam and an all-pervading spirit of restlessness which has descended upon mankind, Europe has been so thoroughly explored, every nook and corner visited, laid bare, analyzed, and described, that nothing remains for a traveller to do, who wishes to strike out something new in the book which must inevitably follow his return home, but to make the most of his personal experience, and give his readers as many

\* *The Friendships of Women.* By William Rounseville Alger. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1868.

original and startling *souvenirs de voyage* as he thinks they will stand. He whose adventures have been most numerous, or who has had the good fortune to witness some great religious or political upheaving, or who, during the past year, has been drawn into the moral whirlpool of the Paris Exposition, and has escaped therefrom without losing his senses, may relate his experience with great pleasure and advantage to his readers, and no small credit to himself. Mr. Morford is an unwearied traveller, who went on his way, if not absolutely rejoicing, yet in a cheerful and enquiring frame of mind. He made use of every element of pleasure within his reach, found ample materials for a pleasant and attractive volume, and has availed himself of them to afford his readers a fund of information which, if not highly important, is at least very entertaining. Visitors to the Great Exposition saw Paris under a new aspect—one something akin to that which a house presents under the infliction of a grand entertainment, when the proprietors are for various reasons glad to receive their guests, and still more rejoiced to be rid of them; the old immovable furniture remains in the house, and the churches and public buildings still stand in Paris, gloomy witnesses of the desecration in which "Napoleon the Little" delights. Mr. Morford is not precisely answerable for this view of the case, but under the circumstances there was much which was new to be said, and he profited by the occasion to say it.

That our countrymen spent more money, neglected more business, and wasted more time than they could well afford by going to the Exposition, their empty coffers, unpaid bills, and woful countenances will amply attest. Mr. Morford says on this subject:

"Americans have been keeping up the reputation this year of spending more money when travelling than the people of any other nation on the globe. To spend money is to have money—at least among superficial thinkers; to be extravagant is to be rich; to belong to a nation of rich men is to belong to one of great power; to belong to a powerful nation is to command respect universally. I do not insist upon this as a legitimate ground of respect; some of the worst fools have been spending the most money. But the fact remains that while this national lavish personal expenditure goes on, the flunky world (and much of Europe is flunky) will scarcely stop to enquire whether the means for such an expenditure have been inherited, earned, or swindled; couriers and valets will lie in wait, hotels will be kept open, carriages will stand, flags will wave, as they have done this season, more than half for American patronage. This whole recklessness of money is a national vice as well as a national folly; but as each one of us catches a reflection from the last flash of the departing dollar, why should the country complain?"

Mr. Morford did not confine himself to Paris; he extended his travels to England, visited some of the most beautiful portions of the Lake country, made a trip to Ireland, and ran over to Switzerland. The most thoughtful, and by far the most interesting, portions of his book are devoted to these, and places away from the French metropolis; we do not find here the "slang" and fast talk which mar the eighth and ninth chapters. Mr. Morford's account of the curious old town of Strasbourg—famous for pies, storks, and churches—is perhaps the best in the book, which improves so much as the author progresses that we are glad to find *au revoir* instead of *adieu* on the last page, which might not inappropriately be closed in the words of Sir Thomas Elyot, who, some three centuries ago, wrote *The Boke of the Governor*, and who said that, if his readers

"Do justly and lovingly interpret my labors, I, during the residue of my life, will now and then set forth such fruits of my study, profitable as I trust unto this my country, leaving malicious readers with their incurable fury."

*The Microscope: its History, Construction, and Application.* By Jabez Hogg, F.L.S., F.R.M.S., etc., etc. With upward of 500 engravings and colored illustrations by Tuffen West. Sixth edition. London and New York: George Routledge & Sons. 1868.—This excellent and, we believe, unrivalled hand-book appears in the present edition considerably enlarged, thoroughly revised, in a great degree rewritten, and in all respects improved. The new colored plates are executed with remarkable delicacy and constitute an important addition to the text. There is no present for young people of the least scientific turn of mind at once more attractive and more useful than this volume, and the favor with which it has been received by the profoundest investigators in microscopic science, both at home and abroad, is a satisfactory guaranty of its trustworthiness.

*A Practical Treatise on Shock after Surgical Operations and Injuries, with Especial Reference to Shock Caused by Railway Accidents.* By Edwin Morris, M.D., etc. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1868.—Mr. Morris accurately defines shock as "that peculiar effect on the animal system produced by violent injuries from any cause, or from violent mental emotions, such as grief, fear, horror, or disgust." The influence of this condition on the organism is indeed very great and is always taken into account by the intelligent surgeon or physician. Mr. Morris describes it very graphically and relates numerous instances of its effects. His remarks upon the treatment of shock are judicious, but we do not think he gives sufficient prominence to the administration of chloroform or other anæsthetic agents.

*The New Eclectic* is a new Baltimore magazine of literature selected from home and foreign publications. The number before us is handsomely printed, consists of one hundred and twenty-eight well-filled pages, and has a solid look that promises permanence. The English articles are taken from *Blackwood*, *St. Paul's*, *Tinsley's*, and *The St. James's Magazine*, etc., and are judiciously selected. Some original matter is promised for the future, thus modifying the present plan of making up exclusively from outside sources. The paper by the Duke of Argyll on *Matters of Religious Differ-*

*ence* printed in this number, and which originally appeared in *Good Words*, has much value and should be widely read.

*The Christian Examiner*, always able and interesting, opens with an essay read before the Western Unitarian Conference, by the Rev. Charles H. Brigham, upon the decrease of educated men and increase of the ignorant in the ministry, until the ablest of the clergy are generally men of a generation now passing away, and the admitted "degeneracy of learning in the liberal body"—the only cure for which he finds in a thorough revision of ministerial education. The next of the "solid" articles is a sketch, founded on an autobiographical sermon by its subject, of the forty-seven years' ministry of the Rev. Samuel J. May, an ardent spiritual and social reformer and philanthropist. The most important and perhaps the most generally interesting paper in the number is Mr. J. F. Clarke's review of the examination by John James Tayler, an eminent English clergyman and one of the most learned and accomplished of living students of ecclesiastical history, into the authorship of the fourth gospel, which Mr. Tayler argues was written not by St. John, but by "a profoundly devout and meditative spirit (probably of the church of Ephesus)" who wrote during the second century. The earlier part of the reviewer's argument (e. g., p. 77) we cannot think a perfectly fair statement of the case; but in the main there is nothing to which exception can be taken, and the review, like the very elaborate and exhaustive one in *The Spectator* last spring, to which it refers, seems to us to leave no room at all for doubt of the authenticity of the gospel—much clearer than that of the Apocalypse. Sandwiched between those we have named are *Vittoria Colonna*, a sketch of the life and poems of the lovely Italian, famous in her day as a poet, revered almost as a saint, and her society sought by the noblest and most eminent men of Italy—a sort of Madame Swetchine in the sixteenth century—but little known to us except as the dearest friend of Michael Angelo, who, with Ariosto, celebrated her virtues in verse; and, lastly, a remarkably vivacious narration by Mrs. Caroline H. Dall of Prof. Piozzi Smith's investigations at the great pyramid, which we recommend as a brief and extremely interesting statement of the pith of that learned gentleman's three volumes, and as giving some insight into the important, almost marvellous characteristics of this wonderful witness to ancient science to the surprisingly large number who are constantly encountering allusions to it, but have not the slightest idea what it is all about.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

HARPER & BROTHERS, New York.—Folks and Fairies. By Lucy R. Comfort. Illustrated. Pp. 259. 1868.  
SHELDON & CO., New York.—A Parting Word. By Newman Hall, L.L.D. Pp. 88. 1868.  
T. B. PETERSON & BROS., Philadelphia.—The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby. People's edition. 1868.

#### PAMPHLETS.

CASSELL, PETER & GALPIN, London and New York.—La Fontaine's Fables. Illustrated by Doré. Part 7.  
The Holy Bible. Illustrated by Doré. Part 22.  
AGATHYNIAN CLUB, New York.—Polydori Virgilio, de Rerum Inventoribus. By John Langley. Pp. xvi., 242. 1868.  
LITTLE, BROWN & CO., Boston.—Stella. By Elbridge Jefferson Cutler. 1868.  
BOARD OF PUBLICATION OF THE REFORMED CHURCH, New York.—The Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, convened in Extra Session in Albany, November, 1867.  
R. M. DE WITT, New York.—Maud's Peril: A Drama. By Watts Phillips. Pp. 26.  
Dandelion's Dodges: A Farce. By Thomas J. Williams. Pp. 19.  
We have also received current numbers of Cassell's Magazine—London and New York; The National Quarterly Review; The Christian Examiner—New York; Merry's Museum—Boston; The American Freemason—Cincinnati; The American Naturalist—Salem; The Southern Review—Baltimore.

#### MUSIC.

C. M. TREMAINE, New York.—Day by Day. Words by the author of John Halifax. Music by W. R. Dempster.  
The Soldier's Prayer. By Joseph Dunbar.  
The Smile whose Sweetness Won Me. Words by J. P. Douglas. Music by Wm. Beeby Graham.

#### TABLE-TALK.

AUSTRIAN technical instruction is the subject of an interesting paper in *The Chronicle*, which we commend to the examination of all interested in scientific education. Our contemporary begins with a sketch of the obstacles the system has had to encounter, upon which we cannot pause, but pass at once to its condition as it is after a gradual work of perfection which commenced in the last century. Austrian public education is represented under the similitude of a tree with two equal branches, one of which, the classical, shows the path through the gymnasium to the university; the other, the technical, that through the realschule to the technical institutions. Within these broad outlines there are, of course, many details. First comes the finishing school, designed for the many children forced to enter on their apprenticeship at the age of twelve, in which tuition is gratuitous and is given in the evening or on Sunday, and on which attendance is enforced under severe penalties upon parents, patrons, or pupils, whichever is to blame: this school is intended to give poor children the advantages wealthy ones find in the hauptschulen or bürgerschulen, giving them such instruction in grammar, arithmetic, drawing, geometry, geography, and history as shall fit them for the school of industry or commerce, the realschule or gewerbschule. The realschulen—of which in 1865 there were 71, containing some 15,000 pupils, and many of them having industrial schools (gewerbschulen) connected with them—teach geometry, physics, natural history, chemistry, architecture, mechanics, drawing, modern languages, etc.: these are designed for children of the middle classes who will be engaged in commerce or navigation, or to fit pupils for fur-

ther technical study. Beside these, pupils who have gone through the primary school, or the already mentioned finishing school, have the choice between the agricultural schools—which, including schools of gardening, woodcraft, etc., are about thirty in number—and the commercial and industrial schools, of which there are seventy, with an attendance of 11,000. The commercial schools have two courses, one for day pupils, one for those engaged in business who can only attend evening classes: the instruction of these is in calligraphy, arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, natural history, commercial history, chemistry, knowledge of trade, goods, counting-house work, and political economy. The gewerbschulen—held in the evening, and generally attached, as we have said, to the realschulen—are under the patronage of the chambers of commerce and industrial associations, often combine practical business with theoretic instruction, and vary the course of instruction in conformity with the special branch of industry whose apprentices frequent them. All have classes in drawing, geometry, physics, etc., but the workshops differ—one of the schools giving lessons to locksmiths, furniture makers, and turners; another to weavers; another to masons and builders, and so on—giving them practice, partly on a large scale, but chiefly on models and other work in miniature, a student of masonry, for instance, making small plaster bricks, which they put into buildings large enough to exemplify the principles of constructing arches, chimneys, and other important parts of houses which are not ordinarily entrusted to apprentices. Beyond all these schools are still higher institutions for technological instruction, for which pupils are prepared when they leave the realschule. Of these there are eight, all but one being divided into a technical and a commercial section, having in 1865 some 3,000 pupils, beside four commercial academies (not the commercial schools before named), with an attendance of about 1,200, and five mining, foresters' and preparatory academies, with some 500 pupils. As an indication of the scope of these higher academies, we quote from *The Chronicle* the list of professorships at the Vienna Polytechnic School:

"The regular course is provided for by the following chairs: Mathematics, 2; Descriptive Geometry, 1; Zoology and Botany, 1; Mineralogy and Geology, 1; Physics, 2; Pure Chemistry, 1; Applied Chemistry, 2; Mechanics, Pure and Applied, 2; Construction of Machinery, 1; Mechanical Technology, 1 (making altogether four chairs of Mechanics); Practical Geometry, Geodesy, and Astronomy, 2; Architecture and Legislation relative to it, 3; Construction of Bridges, Roads, and Railways, 2; Agriculture and Forestry, 1; Political Economy and Statistics, 1; Commercial, Maritime, and Administrative Law, 1; History, 1. Beside this the pupils are taught French, English, Italian, drawing, accounts, etc., but there are no regular chairs for these secondary subjects."

Without direct governmental superintendence such completeness of system as this is entirely out of the question. We believe, however, as we have before said in reference to analogous wants in our public education, that many of its essential features might be obtained by an indirect government subvention—by the requirement, for instance, in the law we shall soon have for competitive examinations of candidates for the civil service, that the applicants shall have studied in public schools; the establishment of scholarships for meritorious pupils of primary schools; by land grants such as were made, though without any provision for their judicious use, in the case of the agricultural colleges a few years ago. Wise legislation that comprehended needed reforms in the common school system, in civil service appointments, and the present demand for agricultural schools, and schools of mining, would be of incalculable national benefit.

THE wisdom of advertising freely in dull times is so manifest that even the interested purpose of those who publicly recommend it ought not, we should say, to prevent traders from pursuing, in such a direction, their own advantage. *The Tribune* says very justly that "when business is dull, that is the very time to advertise. In the first place, that is when you most need to advertise; and in the second, that is when people devote most time to re-reading the newspapers, and when your advertisement consequently is most generally seen." There cannot be the least doubt whatever that sagacious confidence in the matter of advertising is one of the surest stepping-stones to fortune. It is notorious that the largest advertisers are the most successful business men. When *The Tribune*, however, goes on in its article—a leading one, by the way—to make the statement that "A few dollars invested in the columns of *The Tribune* will do more to reverse a sluggish business than anything else in the world," it falls into the bad advocate's blunder and seeks to prove too much.

THE NEW JERSEY CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY last week took the step we have so frequently urged, of ensuring travellers privacy and immunity from the presence of lewd fellows of the baser sort. Their cars—of which but two are now in use, probably by way of experiment—are divided into five entirely separate compartments, arranged, as the newspaper description states, "to sleep comfortably six passengers," and to each of which the servant attached to every car can be summoned by touching a spring. The innovation, we think, is one which only needs to be found out to become immensely popular among all who have any weaknesses in favor of decency; and we are especially glad to see it on this road because the rival lines between New York and Chicago must in time be forced into adopting it, whence it will by degrees spread into general use.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S opinions on the subject of naturalization are receiving pretty thorough discussion in England, where they are naturally regarded with some distaste. The topic is perhaps of greater interest to united Germany in

connection with this country than to England, notwithstanding the Fenian complication. Formerly the views of the United States, however reasonable, received little attention from the small German principalities, that habitually outraged those views for an eminently practical cause. The United States could not get at the little insulated powers, destitute as they were of seaboard or navy. Count Bismarck has changed all this, and among other consequences flows this one affecting the subject of naturalization. In the end the matter will have to be adjusted, we suppose, by an international convention. The common European theory is, of course, that natural allegiance cannot be alienated. The principle as laid down by Blackstone is that it "cannot be forfeited, cancelled, or altered by any change of time, place, or circumstance, nor by anything but the united concurrence of the legislature. For it is a principle of universal law, that the natural-born subject of one prince cannot by any act of his own, not even by swearing allegiance to another, put off or discharge his natural allegiance to the former; for this natural allegiance was intrinsic and primitive, and antecedent to the other, and cannot be divested without the concurrent act of that prince to whom it was first due." The legitimate object of a convention would seem, consistently with this doctrine, to be that of securing the regular concurrence of the original prince in the cases of subjects who may desire it, they intending to become permanent residents abroad. *The Saturday Review*, by the way, in the course of an article on this subject, has a sentence that would constitute a fruitful text for the philologists: "The child of a foreigner born in England was an Englishman to the day of his death; the child of an Englishman born abroad was a foreigner to the day of his death."

## TO HESPER.

O FAIR-HAIRED Hesper, beautifully bright!  
I hail with joy thy mildly splendid ray,  
That gilds the footsteps of the parting Day,  
And heralds the slow advent of the Night.  
Thou bring'st sweet thoughts to wandering lover's soul,  
What time thy tender light is trembling through  
Eve's veil of mist and her soft tears of dew,  
And peace and silence 'gin their calm control.  
Thou art the star of love and lovely dreaming,  
And wak'st to life, in the mind's lone expanses,  
Dead hopes again, to charm us with their gleaming,  
Amid the crowd of thickly-coming fancies:  
Yea, such delight is of thine own creating,  
O star, that seem'st a heart in Eve's breast palpitating!

W. L. SHOEMAKER.

OF the new periodical publications which make their appearance with the new year the most important we have seen is *The American Athenaeum*, a very handsomely printed sixteen-page sheet, to be issued weekly, and "devoted," as its sub-title reads, "to the Progressive and Aesthetic Sciences and to the Individual Culture and the Advancement of the Human Race." Its contents are largely made up of papers of the sort thus indicated, written with enthusiasm, but with a diffuseness and unprecision and at a length that are calculated to repel readers; then comes an eight-column translation from the German, on modern French Progressive Philosophy, especially of Leroux,—French and German translations on philosophical topics being one of the features upon which most stress is laid in the initial number; then, after some extremely short editorial articles on political and general topics, follow several selections, including an article from *The Saturday Review* on Mr. Lowe's educational manifesto, the burden of which is precisely in antagonism to the extreme democratizing theories which we take to be a part of the faith of our new contemporary. Of its literary calibre we do not like to speak with certainty; there is a bewildering frequency of singular verbs in agreement with plural nouns and of kindred solecisms; the editorial articles show an unpleasant hastiness both of conception and of writing, while one in reply to *The Times's* complaint on the inordinate multiplication of books is so wide of the point aimed at rather than made as to be merely silly, and another, entitled *No International Copyright*, argues against such an arrangement on the long-explored theory that the copyright would be a monopoly, a protection of foreign authors at the cost of our own (!), an imposition upon the masses, and otherwise shows total ignorance of the very alphabet of a difficult and many-sided subject. Still, initial numbers never afford a fair criterion, and there is much about the newcomer which gives promise of an able and valuable accession to first-class weekly journalism.—From Cincinnati and from New York respectively we have the first number of *The American Freeman* and of *The Mystic Temple*—the former a quarterly, printed remarkably handsomely on forty-eight very large pages, the other a covered eight-page weekly without pretensions to beauty, both, of course, filled with matter chiefly interesting to the society they address. A monthly so transmogrified as to be practically new is *Merry's Museum*, which passes with the January number into the editorship of Miss L. M. Alcott and signalizes its entrance upon its twenty-eighth year by commencing a new series, while its publisher, Mr. H. B. Fuller, puts it into very handsome dress, with clear type and good wood-cuts, so that on the whole it is a decidedly valuable accession to juvenile literature. *Littell's Living Age*, we may add, also begins the year with new type, and commences Mr. Charles Lever's new novel, *The Brambleighs of Bishop's Folly*.—In New York a marvellous activity is prevailing in the matter of new morning papers. In anticipation of Mr. Dana's purchase of *The Sun* for transformation into a radical journal, Mr. Sweetser last Saturday issued from the office of *The Evening Mail* a one-cent paper called *The*

*Morning Globe*, much akin in tone to *The Mail*. On Monday this was followed by *The Daily Star*, whose sub-title declares it to be the "successor to the old *Sun*," and whose motto, modelled upon *The Sun's* "It shines for all," is "Light for all;" *The Star*—a singular name for a morning paper—is of proportions and price similar to those of *The Globe*. This journal explains that all its editors, reporters, printers, and employees were formerly engaged upon *The Sun*, and it animadverts with more bitterness than decorum upon Mr. Beach's sale of that paper to Mr. Dana, and upon Mr. Sweetser's alacrity in first presenting himself as an applicant for the vacated position.

THE NEWTON-PASCAL controversy has degenerated, as we have before mentioned, into an intermittent spatter between *The Athenaeum* and *Les Mondes*, and in this shape it has become quite funny. The French editor, the Abbé Moigno, has waxed wrathful, and, throwing aside the editorial impersonality, appears in *propria persona*. The cause of war, *The Athenaeum* explains, is, that it said "M. Chasles is not supported by a single man of science," whereas he is very emphatically supported by the Abbé Moigno; therefore it complies with that gentleman's demand that it shall make him the *amende honorable*. "We amend our statement," it says, "and we say that M. Chasles is not supported by a single man of science except the Abbé Moigno! The other men of science in France will understand us, and will accept our apology." Meanwhile the Abbé has found a champion in a M. de La Mouette, who is one of the editorial staff—the translator (!)—of *Les Mondes*. We cannot resist the temptation to quote:

"SIR: You think no Frenchman write your language; I prove you the contraire. You mock yourself of M. Chasles et de M. l'Abbé Moigno, and you find it ridicule that they tell you of what manner Madame the mother of Sir Newton write her pñoms. She was clever dame, Mister! that prove itself by the *anagramme*. I must serve myself of this only word French, for your English ne l' a pas. Take the phrase—

"A so cunning woman she est.

"Make the changemens necessities in the order of the letters, and you shall have—

"Miss Anne Ascough Newton.

"I show this to M. l'Abbé Moigno. I am his familiar, and he laugh under, and he tell me, My dear, communicate tout cela to the journal bad pleasant the *Athenaeum* English, and they will rest in a conviction perfect of the reality of the letters. Salut the most friendly.

"DE LA MOUETTE."

MR. S. BARING-GOULD, in his second volume of *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, broaches a theory that must be very surprising to numbers of good brethren. It is, briefly, that modern British dissent, Wesleyanism in particular, is nothing more nor less than a revival of ancient paganism. In the efficacy which Methodistic religionists attach to heavenly songs Mr. Gould discerns the same spirit which expressed itself in the old legends of magic pipers who led away whole populations that were thenceforth never more heard of, of the magic harp that tempted Jack to climb the bean-stalk to the Titanic mansion in the sky. The Celtic fable of the land beyond the sea reappears, he says, in the universal image of the Sunday-school hymns about meeting "beyond the river," in the "Happy Land." "We make a mistake," he continues, "in considering the Dissent of England, . . . especially where the Celtic element is strong, as a form of Christianity. It is radically different; its framework and nerve are of ancient British origin, passing itself off as a spiritual Christianity. . . . Under the name of Methodism we have the old Druidic religion still alive, energetic, and possibly more vigorous than it was when it exercised a spiritual supremacy over the whole of Britain."

PROF. H. RUTTIMANN, who has held several offices in Switzerland, has just published at Zurich the first volume of a work with an unproducible title, upon the similarity and contrasts between the republics of the Old World and those of the New, bringing into comparison the fundamental principles common to both, and the different phases they have passed through. Tracing the political development of our Constitution, he sketches the state of the colonies under Great Britain, the Revolution, the Constitution of the Confederation of 1778, and the origin and completion of that of 1789, evincing, it is said, a thorough acquaintance with the historical and political literature of the matter, and comparing these instruments with the Swiss scheme of Federation of 1815 and Constitution of 1848. His first book closes with a summary of the changes made in our Constitution and an exposition of the nature of the Union, in which he adheres to Webster's views in opposition to Calhoun's state-rights theories. In the second book, which completes the volume, he describes the organism of the Union, Congress, its composition and business, the President and his subordinate officers, the ministers, the United States courts, their composition, jurisdiction, and relation to the state courts. His criticisms are described as careful and comprehensive, and while he is a strong supporter of democracy and republicanism he does not indiscriminately eulogize either Switzerland or America. His remaining volume is to appear during this year.

GEN. DE TROBRIAND, formerly one of the editors of *Le Courrier des Etats Unis*, and late of the army, is about to publish in Paris, but not in this country, a volume of *Souvenirs de Quatre Ans des Campagnes a l'Armée du Potomac*. It is to be hoped we shall still receive it, for a correspondent of *The Times* who has examined the proof-sheets describes it as a war book of a sort we have not had before. "It gives us," he says, "the sentimental and humorous side of the picture, and resembles the works of some of those

soldier-poets of Germany who, long after the scenes which they describe have lost their political interest, are read with as much avidity as ever for the charms of their ideas and style."

BARON MAROCHETTI, the sculptor, whose works have been at once more abused and more famous than those of any contemporary, has paid the debt of nature. Born in 1805, educated in Paris, a pupil of Bosio and the designer of many important continental works, Marochetti's most celebrated undertakings were his latest ones in London and Glasgow. His chief productions in, as we believe, their chronological order, are the "Young Girl Playing with a Dog," "The Fallen Angel," the statue of Bishop Morsi and that (equestrian) of Emanuel Philibert; the bas reliefs for one of the new triumphal arches at Paris; the monument of Bellini, the composer; the statue of La Tour d'Auvergne; the grand altar of the Madeleine at Paris; Richard Cœur de Lion, now standing (in bronze) in Palace Yard, London; an equestrian statue of Queen Victoria for the city of Glasgow in 1853; the memorial in honor of the Crimean soldiers which stands in Pall Mall, at the foot of St. James' street; the mausoleum of the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I., 1856; the statue (we think) of the Duke of Wellington which surmounts the Albert gate, so called, of Hyde Park; a bust of Prince Albert, and other minor works. The baron received many honors from crowned heads, and his life was, in a material sense, undoubtedly a success. It is, however, an undoubted fact, that many of the ablest critics and artists have always regarded Marochetti as rather a fortunate charlatan than a genuine artist.

THE REV. PIERCE BUTLER is about to follow up the explorations of the Desert of Sinai commenced by his brother, Capt. Henry T. Butler, who fell in the battle of Inkermann. The Royal Geographical Society, Sir Roderick Murchison, Sir John Herschel, and other eminent scientific men have interested themselves in his scheme for making a topographical survey of the region, and he is to leave England during this month.

MR. F. J. FURNIVALL is making a collection of carols and songs of the Nativity, with music, chiefly from inedited MSS.

MR. E. S. DALLAS with the beginning of the year became editor of *Once a Week*, in the room of Mr. Walford.

MR. HENRY J. MORGAN, of Ottawa, has completed his elaborate bibliographical work, the *Bibliotheca Canadensis*, which gives, alphabetically, the names of writers, books, pamphlets, and periodical articles which have to do with Canada.

DR. STRATMANN has just finished the seventh and concluding part of his great *Dictionary of the Old English Language*, compiled from *Writings of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries*, to whose progress we have from time to time referred.

M. ERNEST RENAN'S MS. of *St. Paul* has been sent to the printer.

DR. LIVINGSTONE'S safety is at last definitely assured.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

For convenience of reference, correspondents of this department are desired to arrange questions in distinct slips from answers, and to attach to each of the latter the number prefixed to the query whereto it refers.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

(1.)—In your paper of the 21st inst. you quote:

"Think that day lost whose low-descending sun  
Views from his hand no —"

Will you be kind enough to tell me the author's name, and whether the following is not the correct version:

"Count that day lost whose low-descending sun  
Views at thy hand no worthy action done?"

Respectfully, F. P. F.

419 FOURTH AVE., NEW YORK, Dec. 23, 1867.

In Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* the lines are given:"Think that day lost whose [low] descending sun  
Views from thy hand no noble action done."

And are said to have been written by Jacob Bobart, of Oxford, in the album of David Krieg, which is among the collection of albums in the British Museum.

(2.)—It is a little remarkable that the editor of the very handsome edition of *Father Tom and the Pope* recently issued, or his publishers, had not taken a little more pains to discover the author of that popular brochure, in order that his name might have appeared on the title-page. If they will enquire of most any of the Irishmen of literary proclivities in the city, who were in the old country when the story was first published, they will learn that JOHN FISHER MURRAY was the author and not Dr. Maginn, to whom it is generally attributed. Had the latter been the author it would doubtless have been included in the collection of his works edited by Dr. Mackenzie, and published by Redfield some years since.

AN IRISHMAN.

(3.)—Can I learn through your columns something of Obermann, whom Mr. Matthew Arnold mentions in his poems? The encyclopedias give no account of his life and writings.

An article appeared in *The Westminster Review* for January, 1866 on Coleridge, and another in January, 1867, on *Witchelmann*, evidently by the same hand. Is the author's name known? Yours, HUD.

MILWAUKEE, WIS., December 18, 1867.

(4.)—In the columns of a New York paper, the other day, I saw among the *London* correspondence the following sentence: "What Oxford and Cambridge is to the rest of England, Yale and Harvard is to the great American nation." I conferred with some friends as to the correctness of this expression, when one pronounced it to be in perfect accordance with the rules of grammar (though he failed to mention any); a second, that it was a downright grammatical impropriety, while the remainder, like myself, occasionally troubled with doubts, have put it down as a

query to be answered in the columns of your paper. I am sir, respectfully yours,  
H. G. C.

WATERTOWN, New York, Dec. 17, 1867.

A belief in the accuracy of the sentence could only arise from a confusion which made *what* the subject of *is*. The blunder is indubitable.

(5)—Please inform me if you know such a book as *The Dynamics of Odic Forces*, by Prof. Reichenbach. Or perhaps some of your readers can tell. What I wish to know is, whether it is published in this country, and where I can find it?

(6)—Is it true the Spanish language possesses no verb corresponding to the word, *I will (volo, je veux)*?

(7)—Can you or any of your readers acquaint me with the meaning of the word *odic*? Yours truly,  
HENRY BOVER.

FRIDAY, Dec. 27, 1867.

(6)—*Yo quiero* is the Spanish equivalent for *volo* and *je veux*.

(7)—Reichenbach and other writers on mesmerism will, no doubt, be found to explain about *od* and its adjective *odic*. We only know that *od* is the name given to the force—of chemical, caloric, or magnetic origin—

to whose action mesmeric phenomena are attributed. Our correspondent should read Lord Lytton's *Strange Story*.

(8)—Would this be a correct expression? "Give 'the distance between each building on the diagram." Can the word "between" be thus used? the existence of a second or third building being only implied by "each." Very truly,  
LOUIS.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 28, 1867.

The expression is in rather more common use than the correct one, but there can be no doubt of its entire inaccuracy.

(Query in Vol. VI.)—Among *Notes and Queries* in your paper there was an enquiry as to the authorship of "The conscious water saw its Lord and blushed." You, I think, ascribed it to Milton. Hazlitt, however, in his lectures upon the comic writers of England (p. 101), speaks of a Latin epigram by Crashaw "in his hectic style" as being well known, "The water blushed into wine."

Probably Milton's is only a more elegant paraphrase, not an original expression. DAMON.

PROVIDENCE, December 24, 1867.

If Damon had read *Notes and Queries* carefully he would have seen that we credited Crashaw with the authorship, and that a subsequent correspondent gave the Latin original, which is quoted in the notes to an English edition (Bohn's, we believe) of Boswell's *Johnson*, and attributed, if we mistake not, to another than Crashaw.

(Vol. VI.)—Your correspondent making enquiries as to the place where the poem *Dryburgh Abbey* may be found, is informed that it was published in *Littell's Living Age*, No. 248, date 17th February, 1849 (bound volume No. 20, page 303). It purports to be taken from *The Drawing Room Scrap Book*. Yours, etc.,  
P. L.

MEADVILLE, Pa., Dec. 13, 1867.

(Vol. VI.)—In answer to one of your correspondents, G. W. F. P. There is a life of Cardinal Mezzofanti, written by Doctor Russell, of Maynooth College, published by Duffey, of Dublin, Ireland, which, according to *The London Athenaeum*, is "the work of a scholar and a gentleman." W. P. R.

DECEMBER 13, 1867.

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